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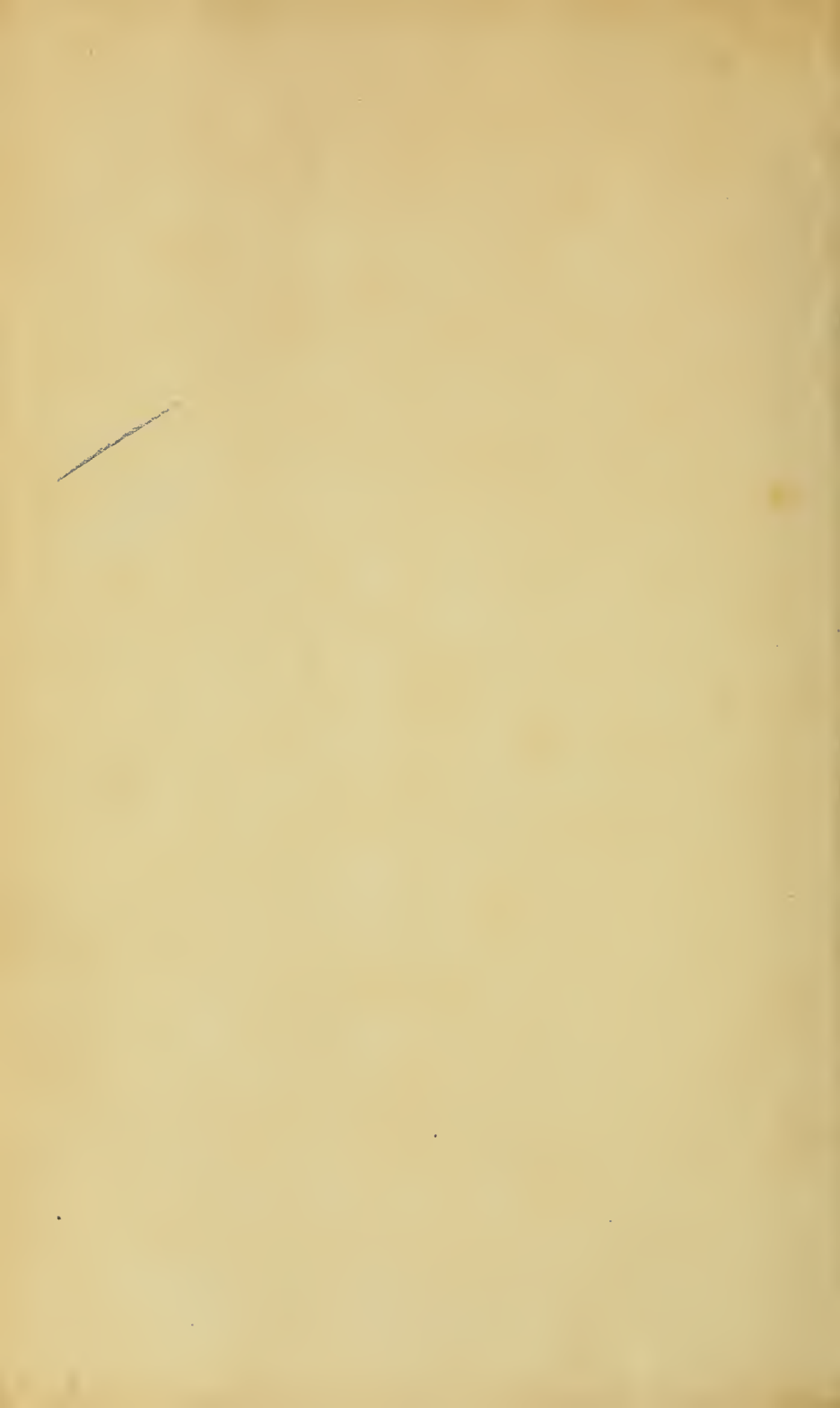
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The Doctrines of Predestination and Assurance examined, with a short View of the Pelagian Controversy.

IN

A S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

THE LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN;

AT HIS

TRIENNIAL VISITATION,

HELD AT

NEWPORT PAGNELL,

IN THE COUNTY OF BUCKS,

On TUESDAY, MAY 23, 1809;

BY THE

REV. THOMAS LE MESURIER, M. A.

RECTOR OF NEWNTON-LONGVILLE, IN THAT COUNTY.

WITH LARGE NOTES.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON;

Sold by F. C. and J. RIVINGTON, St. Paul's Church-Yard; and by
HATCHARD, Piccadilly; also by J. COOKE, and J. PARKER, Oxford;
DEIGHTON, Cambridge; INWOOD, Newport Pagnell;
MARLIN, Aylesbury; and T. BURNHAM,
Northampton.

1812.

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND
GEORGE,
LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

AND THE
REVEREND THE CLERGY
OF THE
DEANRY OF NEWPORT PAGNELL,

THE FOLLOWING
S E R M O N,
PREACHED BEFORE THEM,
AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR DESIRE,

IS
WITH DUTIFUL RESPECT
AND AFFECTION
INSCRIBED.

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CONTENTS.

PROPENSITY of the human Mind to abuse the best Gifts of God—particularly our Reason, p. 1.—This said more especially with reference to the Controversies on Predestination and Grace, p. 2.—Unhappily now instead of being confined to the studious and learned, most prevalent among the uninformed and labouring Classes. *Ibm.*—This always deprecated by our first Reformers, *Ibm.*—Proclamation before our Articles.—Instruction of James 1st to the Divines, sent to the Synod of Dort.—His Injunction. Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man,—Erasmus's Paraphrase, not. *Ibm.*—No Caution of that kind can now be used.—The Clergy attacked for not preaching those Doctrines. p. 3.—Bishop of Lincoln's Charges. p. 4.—Difficulty of the Question admitted by Calvin, &c. Note A.—This of itself might decide the Question, *Ibm.*—Our Religion intended for common Use. *Ibm.*—Recurrence to the Text, *Ibm.*—Contains a Principle plain and universally applicable, and not liable to abuse, p. 5.—How to be taken, *Ibm.*—First great Commandment—Its Extent and Text explained, *Ibm.* Note B. And Calvin's Reasonings on this Text.—Refuted, p. 6.—Doctrine of the Church of Rome founded on this Text.—Refuted, p. 8.—Other objection as to the Gospel being different from the Law, with respect to the means of Salvation.—Answered, p. 9.—Language of our Articles and Homilies, p. 12.—Parallel Texts from our Saviour's mouth, *Ibm.*—Calvin's Comments and Inconsistencies, p. 13.—Understanding of the primitive Christians, p. 15.—So continued during the first Ages, p. 16.—On what occasion these Questions first agitated, and by whom, p. 17.—Pelagius, a Monk, p. 18.—His Errors, *Ibm.*—How refuted, *Ibm.*—Recanted or explained by him, *Ibm.*—Doubts as to what was his Doctrine, *Ibm.*—Semipelagians not considered as Heretics, p. 19.—Austin's zeal in the heat of Controversy first imagined absolute Predestination, *Ibm.*—The immediate origin of the Dispute, *Ibm.*—Absolute Predestination received but coldly, and not generally, p. 21. Note C.—Disregarded till again brought forward by Gotescalc, *Ibm.*—He reprobated and persecuted for it, p. 22.—The Dispute afterwards confined to the Schools, *Ibm.*—How held by Popish Doctors, *Ibm.*—Practice of the Church of Rome as to this, p. 23.—Indulgences and their abuse, *Ibm.*

—Met by Luther in the same way as Austin had opposed Pelagius, *Ibm.*—His denial of Free-will, Note D.—Result of the above, p. 24.—Plain consequences of the Doctrine of absolute Decrees, *Ibm.*—Curious Instance put by Austin himself, p. 25. Note E.—Assertions as to the Doctrine being founded in Scripture, *Ibm.* Note F.—As to its being approved and adopted by our Church.—This last sufficiently refuted, and by whom, *Ibm.*—As to Scripture—General Rules for understanding that as other Books, p. 26. Note G.—Particular scope of the Epistles to the Galatians, and to the Romans, *Ibm.*—Relate only to God's dealing with the Jews as a Nation, *Ibm.*—Admissions of Calvin as to this, *Ibm.*—So as to Esau and Jacob, *Ibm.*—Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans considered, p. 28.—The Simile of the Potter, *Ibm.*—First, as stated in Jeremiah xviii. *Ibm.* Note H.—Reference to Rom. ii. p. 29.—Text from Rom. xi.—And Calvin's commentary upon it, p. 30.—Predestination founded on Foreknowledge, p. 31. Note I.—Doctrine of Assurance as held by the Wesleyan Methodists, p. 32.—They also affect to found themselves on our Articles and Homilies, *Ibm.*—Their leading or distinguishing Tenets.—Conviction of Sin or for Sin, p. 33. Note K.—Experiences, *Ibm.* Note L.—These in fact but new Names for Repentance and Faith, only distorted and exaggerated, p. 33.—Mischief and delusion of this, *Ibm.*—Bands or Class Meetings, *Ibm.*—No Warrant in Scripture for this, p. 34.—Texts cited, p. 35.—Calvin's and Austin's opinions on the subject, *Ibm.*—Our Homilies cited, p. 36.—Other Charge against the Clergy, that they do not preach Justification by Faith only, p. 37.—Eleventh Article and Homily on Salvation, *Ibm.*—Bad Faith of Wesley in citing this, *Ibm.*—What the Doctrine contained in it, *Ibm.*—Salvation by Grace, p. 38.—That Boasting may be shut out, p. 39.—This requisite with respect to religious Enthusiasts, not less than other men, *Ibm.* Note M.—Recurrence to the rule laid down in the beginning, p. 40.—Not to add any more than to take from the word, *Ibm.*—Conclusion.

NOTE (A.) p. 4.

Calvin's admissions as to the difficulties attending the doctrine of Predestination.—Cites Austin in a remarkable passage where the same admission is made, and a sort of preaching very like that of Whitfield and his followers is reprobated.—Turretin's opinion as to preaching the doctrine.—Whitgift's.

CONTENTS.

vii

NOTE (B.) p. 8.

Parable of the good Samaritan.—There also, the work proposed for imitation not above human powers, overthrows Calvin's reasonings.—Foundation of righteousness. Distinction between Works and Grace—how to be taken.—Our eternal Life must always have been of Grace.—Luke xvii. The unprofitable Servant.—Terms of Salvation.—Answer to Argument from the Terms of the Law.—Paul's Argument, the Argument "ad hominem," and so to be considered.—"Gratuitum donum," and "gratuita remissio," how to be taken.

NOTE (C.) p. 21.

Reference to Cardinal Noris.—France semi-pelagian in the ages following that of Augustine. The "Predestinati" condemned.—Pelagius's Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans—how preserved.—Garnier's complaint of Catholic Doctors disputing among themselves without reason.—Confusion in the middle ages about Augustinianism and Pelagianism.

NOTE (D.) p. 23.

Luther's Treatise "De Servo Arbitrio."—Its Violence and Extravagance—Abuse of Erasmus.—Luther and Calvin and Austin, falsely make their Doctrine of Predestination essentially connected with the true Doctrine of Grace.—Inconsistencies of Austin respecting Free-will.—Quotations from him.—His own Writings cited against him by Pelagius.—His Retractions.—Even Luther not wholly consistent.—Calvin also contradicts himself on the subject.—His distinctions.—His violent declarations against the use of Reason and Common Sense.

NOTE (E.) p. 25.

Calvin's abuse of his opponents.—Occasionally lowers his Doctrine.—Curious Answers to those who urge the apparent Injustice of absolute Reprobation.—His and Luther's, and Austin's use of the passages of St. Paul, with respect to those who pry into God's counsels.—This Rashness and Presumption more imputable to them than to us.—Cases unnecessarily and unwarrantably put by them for the purpose of silencing their opponents.

NOTE (F.) p. 25.

The Text, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," examined.—Eſau and Jacob.—Literal meaning of Scripture inſiſted on by Calvin, &c.—With how little reaſon.—Anſwer from Eraſmus.—God's juſtice—His wiſdom and mercy.—How the expreſſions of St. Paul are to be applied.

NOTE (G.) p. 26.

Calvin's diſtinctiſms when preſſed with particular Texts,—forgot by him when reaſoning on the Epiſtle to the Romans.—Texts adduced.—His Expreſſion of "*faceſſat longior Diſputatio*."—Another Principle of Calvin making againſt him.—Quotation from Gerard Voſſius as to the mode of interpreting Scripture.

NOTE (H.) p. 28.

Calvin's commentary on Jeremiah xviii.—Auſtin's admissions as to the ſimile of the Potter.—Eraſmus's Paraphraſe.—Paſſage from 2 Tim. c. ii. v. 20, &c.

NOTE (I.) p. 32.

Eraſmus's idea of Fore-knowledge and Predeſtination.—Dr. Hey's opinion as to Predeſtination.—What it is not.—Greek Fathers.—Chryſoſtom abuſed by Calvin.

NOTE (K.) p. 33.

Jargon of Methodiſts in their peculiar term of "Conviction for Sin."—No way warranted by Scripture.—The word uſed differently at times by them.—Benſon's and Weſley's account of this "Conviction.—Instances of it as recorded by themſelves.—Alledged neceſſity of it, and of its being ſenſibly felt.—Seem to apologize for thoſe who cannot be particular in this reſpect.

NOTE (L.) p. 33.

"Experiences," as maintained to be neceſſary by the Methodiſts.—Admitted by themſelves that they may lead to Pride, yet hold that they are not to be diſcouraged.—Specimens of the Doctrines and Exemplifications of it in Individuals.—Weſley's Mother.—Her Epitaph.—Weſley

CONTENTS.

ix

himself.—His aping of St. Paul.—Self-commendation and Self-abasement.—Further account according to Mr. Whitehead.—Other Specimens, particularly Miss Isabella Wilson.—Indecent and profane Familiarity with which our Saviour is treated by her and others.

NOTE (M.) p. 39.

Spiritual Pride of the Methodists.—Their boasts of their success examined.—Remarkable Philippic from their own Magazine against those who set up for Teachers in Religion without being properly qualified—applied to themselves, and strongly recommended to their consideration.

the city of London, from the first settlement of the
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Page 42.	l. 24.	<i>for</i>	Electiones	<i>read</i>	Electionis
44.	27.		Pelaguis		Pelagius
45.	35.		et		es
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55.	30.	<i>after</i>	"Way"	<i>insert</i>	"it"
57.	10.	<i>dele inverted commas after</i>	"blood"		
	11.	<i>dele inverted commas after</i>	"is" and <i>insert them</i>		
			<i>before</i>		"this."
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MATTHEW, xix. 17.

IF THOU WILT ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE
COMMANDMENTS.

THE weakness of the human mind is in nothing more apparent than in its propensity to abuse and to pervert the best gifts of the Almighty : and this is in nothing more visible than in that best gift of all, our Reason. That most excellent Faculty, which was given us in order that we might acquaint ourselves with our Creator, and by understanding His will, and conforming ourselves to it, secure the blessings which He has prepared for us, has been in many cases so employed, as if it had been rather designed to draw away our attention and our love from God than to bring us nearer to him. Often it is taken up with the most empty and frivolous pursuits ; and often has its utmost subtilty and vigour been exerted only to perplex and to confound that which before was evident and clear. In contemplating some of its most laborious operations, one is almost tempted to suppose that the effect produced was purposely intended, like the golden apples of which we read in fabulous history, to divert us from our proper course.

Thus it has happened that the religion of Christ, which in its very promulgation was declared to be "revealed to babes," that is, to the weak and ig-

norant, has been perplexed and clouded with such doubts and difficulties as even the best informed and the most wise have been greatly puzzled to remove and to unravel.

I speak this with a particular view to those controversies respecting Predestination and Grace; to that opposition so unnecessarily as well as foolishly set up between Faith and Good Works, which have for so many ages disturbed the peace of the Christian Church; and which, most unhappily, after having been in a great measure confined to the learned and the studious, have in these later times become most prevalent and been brought into fashion, almost exclusively, among the uninformed and labouring classes of mankind; which therefore press themselves most imperiously on our notice; which we are no longer at liberty to overlook or to disregard; but respecting which we are even bound to express our opinion, lest those who look up immediately to us for instruction, should, by our seeming acquiescence, be drawn into Error.

This is a state of things which was both apprehended and deprecated by our first Reformers. Many even of those who most strenuously contended for these tenets, yet with an inconsistency which betrayed the weakness of the cause, recommended that they should not be brought into frequent or general discussion: and as to our Church in particular, strong cautions were given by those who were her rulers, that they should not, without the most apparent necessity, and only by men of approved knowledge and character, be agitated or even named in public discourses. (1)

(1) See the Proclamation prefixed to the Articles; and James the First's Instructions to the Divines sent to the Synod of Dort; one of which was, "Your advice shall be to those churches that
" their ministers do not deliver in the pulpit to the people those
" things for ordinary doctrines, which are the highest points of
" the schools, and not fit for vulgar capacity, but disputable on

Sentiments so rational, and provisions so wise, it is evident that we can no longer follow. Such is the state of society, and such the nature of our duties, that we cannot always be silent when we will. It is always in the power of the turbulent and the wrong-headed, to force into action and to harass with contention, even the most peaceable and the most considerate. It is now more than half a century since a cry was raised, and has more or less been kept up against the Established Clergy, in a great measure because they were backward to preach on those subjects. They have been accused of deserting the true Faith, and stigmatized as dissemblers before God. Repeatedly as this charge has been repelled, it continues still to be brought forward: the same necessity therefore constrains us to be urgent, as well in the defence of ourselves as in the assertion of what we conscientiously be-

"both sides." Collier's Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 716, and Fuller's Church Hist. b. x. p. 78. See also his Injunctions in 1622, one of which was, "That no preacher, of what title soever, under the degree of a bishop, or a dean at the least, do, from henceforth presume to preach in any popular auditory the deep points of predestination, election, reprobation, or the universal efficacy, resistibility or irresistibility of God's grace; but leave those themes rather to be handled by the learned men, and that moderately and modestly, by use and application rather than by way of positive doctrine; being fitter for the schools than for private auditories." Collier's Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 723. As to the earlier Reformers, their opinion in this respect plainly appears from the circumstance of the word "Predestination" not being to be found (any more than the thing mentioned) in the Homilies; nor have I met with it in any of the Injunctions issued in Henry the VIIIth's or Edward the VIth's reign. On the contrary, in the "Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man, put forth by Authority," it was directed that "All curious reasonings about predestination were to be set apart: there being no certainty to be had of an election, but by feeling the motion of God's spirit in us, by a good and virtuous life, and by persevering in it to the end." See Burnet's Hist. of the Ref. vol. i. p. 292. To this I may add the well known fact, often referred to for this purpose, of Erasmus's Paraphrase having been ordered to be placed in the churches, which, it is clear, does not favour absolute decrees.

lieve to be the truth. These are facts so notorious, more especially in this neighbourhood, that no man can wonder at my laying these topics before you at this moment. Indeed, if any apology were necessary, I might find it in the example of those whose authority must be considered to be, as in all places very weighty and important, so particularly in this place, and as to this point, most material and even conclusive. (2)

That which I before hinted at, as admitted even by some of the followers of Calvin, of the difficulty and liability to abuse of his doctrine, might go a great way of itself to decide the question. (3) For, to say of a doctrine that it is not fit for common use, and for all understandings, is to say that it cannot form an essential part of such a religion as ours. That which was preached so peculiarly to the poor could never be deemed to consist in matters of deep speculation and doubtful research.

That indeed Christianity was intended to be most emphatically a practical religion, is a position which seems to be with great explicitness laid down in my text. Our Lord being asked by one who appears to have been seriously, though not sufficiently, well disposed, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" the answer was, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments." And, that there might be the less doubt upon the subject, our great Teacher in the first instance specifies the Commandments of the second table, "Thou shalt do no murder;" "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" "Thou shalt not steal;" "Thou shalt not bear false witness;" "Honour thy father and thy mother;" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." All these

(2) The Bishop of Lincoln, in his two Charges already printed, as well as in those which he has since delivered, and which also he has, at the request of his clergy, declared his intention to publish.

(3) See additional note (A.)

are commandments which particularly point to good works, to virtues which must be openly and actively practised. Here also (and therefore it is that I have particularly singled out this passage) we have what I conceive to be the duty of a Christian clearly pointed out, and concentrated, as it were, into one general principle; a principle, which, if properly enforced, will not only direct us in the line which we are to pursue, but also essentially contribute to preserve us from error. The keeping of God's Commandments, or, in other words, obedience to his Will, does seem to me to be that principle, or that summary of our duty, which is applicable to all cases and to all persons, and least liable to abuse. It may materially prevent our being bewildered with distinctions between Faith and Good Works, Justification and Sanctification, if we accustom ourselves at all times to enquire what it is that God has positively commanded us to believe. When urged with any novel or strange doctrine, we may, in almost all cases, find a ready answer by asking whether it be the subject of any distinct precept. In all cases we are entitled to say not only "Where is it written?" but "Where is it commanded?" Because, if not explicitly enjoined, we may reasonably conclude, that the believing or maintaining of it is not essentially necessary to our salvation.

But here it may be proper to guard against any misunderstanding. Let it be observed, therefore, that among the Commandments of God are to be included, even according to this reasoning, matters of Faith, as well as of Practice: if indeed, properly speaking, the one can be separated from the other. The first great commandment, which is also the first in the decalogue, is, that we shall serve God, or, as it is expressed, that we shall "love him with all our heart; and with all our soul, and with all our strength:" but it is impossi-

ble that we can love him or serve him, without putting our faith in him. "He that cometh to "God," says the apostle to the Hebrews, in a well known passage, "must believe that he is, and that "he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek "him.*" But this binds us, to whom the mystery hid from ages has been made known, not only to a general belief in God, but to a belief in the great work of our redemption, in the atonement, in the divinity of our Saviour and of the Holy Ghost, and if there be any other doctrine explicitly laid down, and directly connected with our salvation. Whatever there is for which we are expressly enjoined to give God thanks, and to render him praise and honour, most evidently must be taken as necessary to be believed; and without that belief we cannot be considered as keeping the Commandments. Indeed, those which I have specified, are all truly practical doctrines, calculated and intended to have the greatest and most beneficial influence upon the whole course of our lives.(4)

This may serve in some degree as an answer to the construction which has been put upon my text, and by which the advocates for absolute decrees endeavour to elude its force. Calvin and others will have it, that in thus referring to the Commandments, our Lord did not mean really to propose the keeping of them as the way to be saved; but that he meant, from the example of the young man, to shew our inability to keep them, and consequently the fallacy of trusting to any such performance.

But that in fact, no such consequence can be deduced, may easily be shewn. In the first place, our Lord held the same language on other occa-

(4) So, I grant, it has been said of unconditional predestination, but with what propriety, I think, may be left with any reader to determine.

* Heb. xi. 6.

sions, where there could be no ground for any such inference. As in the case of the lawyer who tempted him, when, after a specification of the two great Commandments, our Lord positively said, "Thou hast answered right, this do, and thou shalt live."* The fact appears to be with respect to this young man, or ruler, that his faith was imperfect: and was immediately shewn to be so in practice. For, whereas he had answered with respect to the Commandments of the second table that "all these he had kept from his youth up," our Lord proceeded to try him as to those of the first: as to his love of God: and required of him that proof of his devotion which he should not have hesitated to shew when called upon by one whom by his very manner of addressing him he had acknowledged to be speaking with divine authority. Had he loved God, as he ought, with all his heart and with all his mind, he would not have hesitated to do as he was bid, to "sell all that he had, and give it to the poor, and take up his cross." But in this he failed; and, that, as we are told, from his unfortunate attachment to his riches. (5) The lesson which was to be derived

* Luke x. ver. 28.

(5) "For he had great riches." "Ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτηνὰ πολλὰ." Expressly and plainly as the cause of this young man's failure is here shewn, Calvin (in his Commentary ad loc.) chooses to assign another and a different one. "Obstabat," says he, "cæca operum confidentia." And this because he asks, "What good thing shall I do?" &c. "Non simpliciter rogat quomodo et quâ viâ perveniat ad viam, sed quid boni faciendo eam acquirat. Merita igitur somniat, quibus vita æterna reddatur quasi compensatio." Here we have a Pelagian conjured up, ages before any such being existed. The young man had clearly no such idea in his head; he asked the question according to what he had been used to consider as the will of God. He asked it, as Calvin himself admits, sincerely. Indeed in another passage Calvin himself can see that nothing depends on this precise form of words. For when commenting on Luke x. 25. compared with Matt. xxii. and Mark xii. he says, "In formâ interrogationis nonnihil a Matthæo et Marco differt Lucas, nam apud hunc quærît scriba quid faci-

from this, our Saviour shewed by what he immediately subjoined as to the difficulty which there was in a rich man being saved: which, and which only, is the true inference to be drawn from the failure of the young man.

That, indeed, our Lord never meant (contrary to the plain import of his words), to have it understood that it was not by keeping the Commandments that we were to seek for salvation, further appears from this, that the very proof of devotion which was in this case required was no more than what had been actually shewn, and was afterwards in numerous instances displayed by many of his Disciples. Clearly, therefore, he proposed nothing which was out of the reach of human ability, even in the ordinary course of things. (6)

And this also may serve as an answer to the arguments which the Romanists have drawn from this passage in favour of their doctrine of Perfection; and their imposition or recommendation of Monastic Vows as connected therewith. For they say that hence it appears that there is a degree of perfection to which a man may attain beyond keeping the Commandments: and so go on to hold out a prospect of higher reward to those who embrace a state of what they call voluntary poverty and greater mortification, as being that state of perfection. Now I have shewn, I trust satisfactorily, that this passage proves no such thing; since the renunciation of the world at that moment, and under those circumstances, would in fact have been

*“endo vitam æternam consequantur homines: apud alios vero duos
“quodnam in lege summum sit mandatum. Idem tamen est finis,”*
&c. Now, as in this last case, there was nothing in the particular turn of the expression, why should there be in the other? For it will not be said that there is any real distinction to be made between “what thing” and “what good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?” The young man was not, any more than the scribe, dreaming of merits, in the theological sense of the word.

(6) See additional note (B).

neither more nor less than obedience to the first Commandment: an obedience which all we, who reprobate monastic vows, do, equally as much as they, allow to be indispensable whenever it can be shewn that God calls upon us to make the sacrifice. That in those cases, so common in their church, there is no such call, is what we assert, and experience but too well proves. And it may be further shewn that their doctrine of Perfection, as managed by them, is not only highly presumptuous, but leads to something very like impiety.

There is also, I am well aware, another objection which may be made to me; it is, indeed, the great argument of the Antinomians; that in speaking of obedience to the commands of God, as being the prescribed means of salvation, I attribute to the New Covenant, that which is true only under the Old; that it was only upon the Israelites that a strict observance of the Commandments was imposed: and, that only to them it was promised that the reward should follow upon the performance. Nay, I shall be told of "the liberty where-
"with Christ hath made us free,"* in contradistinction to the bondage under which they were kept.

I must, however, still deny that any such distinction exists. In whatever respect there may be a difference between them and us, in this there is none. In truth, and in fact, obedience to God's Word is as much and as strongly required of us, as it was of them. The truth is, I say, that we as well as they, and they not more than we, are and were bound to serve God according to such Commandments as he has given us. And if he has to us in these latter days made a more full Revelation of his will, he has only thereby imposed upon us a stronger and more strict obligation to be zealous and punctual in the discharge of that duty.

* Gal. v. 1.

Neither is it true that forgiveness of sins, which of course, implies a departure from the rigour of the law, was a doctrine unknown to the Jews, or a blessing which was not extended to them. That they were often, in fact, forgiven, is plain. And that they might always entertain an expectation of forgiveness was a consequence which resulted from the various atonements which under the law were directed to be made by sacrifice. Neither were they devoid of that faith which is become our inheritance. True it is, that they, and even the fathers among them, "saw the promises only, "afar off:" yet they "embraced them," as it is expressly said, "and confessed that they were "strangers on the earth."* Nay, the mass of the people, however mistaken in their ideas of what their redemption should be, yet looked for a Redeemer; and it is evident that, at least in the age immediately preceding our Lord's coming, they extended their views into a world to come.

The motives held out to them for obedience, were indeed somewhat different from those with which we are or should be actuated; and this was of necessity; for while it pleased God to withhold from them the full knowledge of the spiritual blessings which he had prepared for the faithful and obedient, they could only, or, at least, best be incited to a zealous performance of their duty by the prospect of temporal rewards. Yet, let it be remembered, that to us also it is not forbidden to look for some sort of recompence upon earth; while, on the other hand, among them many individuals served God at the expence of their worldly possessions, and even of their lives; and so must have looked to something beyond this earth.

In one great point, it is clear also, that the command was and is the same to both. They, as well

* Hebrews xi. 13.

as we, were enjoined to put their whole trust in God, and to look up to him only for help in all their necessities of whatever description. It must be admitted, indeed, that in the nature of this aid thus to be expected from God, their case and ours might to a certain degree vary. They were supported by the actual presence or manifestation of God, or by having almost always with them some of his acknowledged and inspired Prophets. The grace therefore vouchsafed to them was for the most part that which is called external. We, on the contrary, are bidden to look for that which is internal; for that fellowship of the Holy Ghost, which is even to "prevent us," if I may use the expression of our liturgy, (7) by putting into our hearts good desires. Yet, with respect to this also, the observation which I before made as to a community of motives will be found equally applicable, for we need only turn to the Book of Psalms, that true and perfect manual of devotion for Christians, not less than for Jews, to be convinced that pious men under the first dispensation, both desired to be, and were supported inwardly by the Spirit of God: As, on the other hand, it is not less clear that we, on our part, pray for external graces also; that is, for that comfort and assistance which is derived from our being placed in circumstances, and meeting with events more or less advantageous, as well to our spiritual as to our temporal welfare.

That the idea of this affinity between, or rather identity with the Old and New Covenant is not

(7) I had said, "obsolete" expression, but I was properly reminded, that I might be misunderstood as disapproving of this and similar phrases in our services and translation of the scriptures, which it was never in my thoughts to do. Indeed I am persuaded, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find other words, which in these cases could, without prejudice to the force and clearness of the passage, be substituted.

novel, may be shewn further, as well from our seventh Article, as from the Homilies of our Church, in one of which, after observations of the same tendency as those which I have made, it is said with even more explicitness than I have used, of the good men in old time, that "in effect they and we "be all one: We have the same faith that they "had in God, and they the same that we have." (8) And if the fact be so, it will be sufficient of itself to establish the position which I have laid down respecting what should be the great and leading principle of action. Because it is certain, that under the law it was the one which was directly and solely held out. Obedience to God's will, or in other words, as I have before said, the observance of his Commandments, is the proclaimed condition under which the Israelites were to enjoy the promised blessings, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature; and disobedience to those Commandments (and that wilful) was equally held forth as the only cause of forfeiture.

That now the same condition is required of us under the New Covenant, I have already shewn, by two texts, as plain as possible, out of the mouth of our Saviour himself. If we take up again the inquiry, we shall find almost innumerable passages presenting themselves to that effect. Thus he tells us, in his Sermon on the Mount, "Not every one "that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into "the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the "will of my Father which is in Heaven." And before that, with a direct reference to what I have mentioned respecting the Old Covenant, having said,

(8) Second part of the Sermon on Faith, p. 23, fol. edit. The whole passage is remarkable, and fully supports all that I have advanced. Among other things it is said, "Although they were not "named Christians, yet was it a Christian faith that they had, for "they looked for all benefits of God the Father, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, as we now do, &c."

“Think not that I come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil,” (9) he subjoins, “Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these Commandments, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven.”* From what our Lord said in public, let us pass to the last scene of his life upon earth, then when in private converse with his Disciples, he partly opened to them, or rather prepared them for receiving the mysteries of his Gospel. What was then his language? Still the same. “If ye love me, keep my Commandments.”† “If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my love.” Again, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

(9) Calvin's words, in his commentary on this passage, are worth noting. “Duabus maximè causis adductus fuisse videtur (sc. Christus) ad testandum hunc legis et evangelii consensum. Simulac emergit nova aliqua docendi ratio, id perinde vulgus arripit, ac si omnium rerum conversio fieret. Talis autem erat evangelii prædicatio ut spem faceret aliter constituendæ ecclesiæ quam prius fuerat. Putabant igitur vetus et usitatum regimen aboleri: quæ opinio multis modis valdè noxia erat; pii enim Dei cultores nunquam evangelium amplexi essent, si fuisset a lege defectio; leves autem et turbulenti spiritus ansâ ereptâ totum religionis statum convellere cupidè aggressi essent.” (which Calvin himself might as well have considered, when he took away episcopacy at Geneva. Lower down he says), “Pollicitus quidem Deus fuerat novum fœdus Christi adventu, sed simul ostenderat minimè diversum fore a primo: quin potius hunc esse finem ut fœdus quod ab initio pepigerat cum suis in perpetuum sanciret. *Inscribam, inquit leges meas in corda ipsorum, et peccata obliviscar.*” Jer. xxxi. ver. 33. And he concludes, “Ideo discamus sacrum hunc legis et evangelii nexum inviolabilem servare, quem multi” (and, it may be thought, he among the rest: certainly many of his followers) “perperam dissolvunt. Neque enim hoc ad stabiliendam evangelii fidem parum valet, dum audimus nihil aliud esse quam legis complementum, ut mutuâ concordia Deum communem auctorem referant.” Calvin Oper. t. vi. p. 68.

* Matth. v. 17. 19.

† John xiv. 15.

And afterwards, "These things I command you, "that ye love one another."* All these strong injunctions, pointing, as you see, to the same end, the keeping of the Commandments, and particularly those which are comprized in the love of our neighbour: (10) But, indeed, that to works of charity,

* John xv. 10. 14. 17.

(10) Calvin, however, is so averse to admitting that the fulfilment of God's promises at all depends on any act of our's, that he even contradicts the words of Christ. In his commentary on Matth. xxii. 40, "On these two Commandments hang all the law "and the prophets," he makes a distinction between Promises and Commandments, and then tells us that our reconciliation with God *does not depend* on these two Commandments. His argument is, That Christ does not mean to say generally what is God's word, "quid discendum sit in Dei verbo, sed pro circumstantiâ causæ in "quem scopum dirigantur omnia mandata admonet. Interim (he "goes on) gratuita peccatorum remissio per quam Deo reconciliamur, fiducia Dei invocandi, arrha futuræ hæreditatis et *aliæ* "OMNES *fidei partes* NON PENDENT in his duobus mandatis; "quia aliud est exigere quod debetur, aliud offerri quod deest." But what if the offer of forgiveness, and the encouragement to pray, nay, and (the earnest of the inheritance, be found equally with the exaction of the debt in the Old as in the New Testament? And see how this contradicts what is cited from him in the last note, particularly the passage from Jeremiah. What indeed hinders that our enjoyment of God's grace, and the full effect of faith, should be suspended on the event of our doing God's commandments? Luther's distinction is, "Novum Testamentum propriè "constat promissionibus et exhortationibus, sicut vetus legibus et "minis." De Servo Arbitrio, c. cxxi. As if there were not promises and threatenings, commandments and exhortations, just as much in the one as in the other: but such is the sort of reasoning by which plain texts are to be eluded, in order that they may not invalidate a favourite doctrine. Indeed the inconsistencies of absolute predestinarians, when commenting upon Scripture, are as numerous as they are inevitable. Take another specimen in Calvin's comment on the first of these great precepts. "Quamvis longè aliter Deum amare conveniat quam homines, non tamen abs re Deus pro cultu vel honore dilectionem "a nobis requirit, quia hoc modo significat non alium sibi cultum "quam *voluntarium* placere." And lower down he says, "Discamus itaque pietatis initium esse Dei amorem, quia Deus "coacta hominum obsequia repudiat; vultque sponte et liberaliter coli." And yet according to him, a man is overruled by an antecedent and irresistible decree in every thing that he does! Calv. Oper. t. 6. p. 252 and 253. In this, as in other incon-

when done with the proper regard to God's word, eternal life is held out as a recompence, who can doubt, that but reads that awful and affecting representation of the last day recorded in St. Matthew? You cannot forget the words which, we are told, will then be pronounced by our righteous Judge to the blessed of his Father, "I was an
"hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty,
"and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye
"took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was in
"prison, and ye came unto me." (11)

I need not multiply quotations in so plain a case, or I might adduce hundreds of texts to the same purpose. I might shew all the apostles concurring in the same language. That indeed this was the view of their duty, which was entertained by the primitive Christians, we might conclude even from that memorable appeal to their lives, which is handed down to us. "Non loquimur magna, sed
"vivimus" (12), was the plain and forcible answer which they returned to the vaunts and the sophistry

astencies, he only follows Austin. V. inf. Note (11) and additional note D.

(11) Matth. xxv. 35, 36. Here also (such is the force of truth) we have Calvin against himself. After making a number of distinctions, in order to take off the full force of this text, he is fain to add, "*Unde etiam colligimus, si cupimus summo judici probari vitam nostram, non esse vagandum in nostris figmentis.*" (He says this against the Romanists, but it is just as applicable to other persons). "*Sed potius spectandum quid ille præcipue a nobis exigit. Nam quicumque ab ejus præceptis discesserint quantumvis ludent ac se macerent in fictiliis operibus*" (or we may add, in *vanâ fidei jactantiâ*) "*ultimo die hoc tandem audient Quis hæc quasivit a manibus vestris?*" Calv. Oper. t. vi. 284. And let any Calvinist (or rather, I should say, any fair reasoner,) reconcile this with absolute decrees, or even with what Calvin (as cited in the preceding note) has said of the effect of keeping the Commandments, and our salvation not depending upon them.

(12) See Cyprian de Dono Patientiæ, towards the beginning; and Minutius Felix, § 38. Which of these authors wrote first, I believe is not clear. The same plea in substance is, however, urged by others of the early apologists.

of their pagan antagonists. By what process it happened, that in a subsequent age words came to take the place of actions, that good works came first to be undervalued and afterwards in a manner overlooked ; how men became so rash as to circumscribe, within bounds of their own making, that redemption which is expressly declared to belong to all, and by fanciful systems of their own, to shut out from the hope of salvation the greater part of mankind, is indeed surprising, and it may be worth our while shortly to enquire, in the hope that in this, as in all other cases, the tracing of an error may enable us to shew the rottenness of its foundations.

During the first ages of the church, when the disciples were almost continually suffering under persecution, or living in the apprehension of it, the idea does not seem to have entered into any man's mind of enquiring with any great degree of nicety the measure of grace which was to be prayed for, or the nature and extent of that support and assistance which was to be expected at the hand of God. When the necessity for divine aid was so apparent and unquestionable, when the wants and imperfections of every individual were, by the dangers and the labours of his situation, so powerfully and so constantly forced upon his recollection, it was natural that he should be only anxious to secure that help by any means in his power, and not cavil or perplex himself about the terms upon which it was granted, or might be obtained (13). It was only when the churches had

(13) This is clearly admitted by Austin himself, in his treatise "De Predestinatione Sanctorum," § 27, where, after citing the book of Wisdom and the epistle to the Romans, and referring generally to what he has alleged from the Scriptures, he adds, "Quid igitur opus est ut eorum scrutemur opuscula, qui prius quam ista hæresis oriretur non habuerunt necessitatem in hac difficili ad solvendum questione versari? quod procul dubio

rest, and external violence ceased to be any longer a matter of apprehension, that questions of that sort came to be agitated. This novelty too (for such I must call it), originated precisely in the quarter where we should most expect to find it; among those who, out of a mistaken idea of perfection, having retired from the world in order to devote themselves to contemplation, and having renounced at once the cares and the duties of active life, of course gave up their minds a prey to their imagination, and were glad to lay hold of a new opinion, if it were only as a subject upon which to employ their thoughts. It was, in short, a monk, (14) the well known Pelagius, who, in the

facere si respondere talibus cogerentur. Unde factum est ut de gratiâ Dei quid sentirent breviter quibusdam horum scriptorum locis et transeunter attigerint." And he collects their tenets respecting grace from the number and scope of their prayers only. "*Frequentationibus autem orationum simpliciter apparebat Dei gratia quid valeret; non enim posceretur a Deo quæ præcipit fieri, nisi ab illo donaretur ut fierent.*" Observe too in addition to what has been said in note (3) what he says of the difficulties of predestination; that it is "*difficilis ad solvendum quæstio.*" See more fully Gerard. J. Vossius in *Historiâ Controversiarum quæ Pelagius et ejus reliquæ moverunt. Lib. iv. par. ii. thes. i.* Where he shews from Austin's own words that his early opinions were even semipelagian, and the same of many of the earlier fathers, though he is not willing to allow it to have been the case with all. I cannot help subjoining the note of the Antwerp editor of Austin's works to the commentary on the epistle to the Romans. "*Hoc opus conscripsit Presbyter Augustinus circ. ann. cccxciv. cum ex communibus notionibus scripturam interpretaretur. Quare in eo multa inveniuntur quæ meré Pelagiana sunt, ut vel retractationum loco præfixo videre est. Mirum est hominem qui nunquam a quoquam propterea damnatus fuerat quasi hærelicus, imo vero ab omnibus laudatus, postea in eadem dogmata invectum fuisse, quasi cum religione Christianâ consistere non possent. Si nunquam exortæ fuissent rixæ Pelagianæ in eis sententiis mortuus esset.*" Appendix Augustiniana, p. 436.

(14) This circumstance is mentioned by Austin himself, in a way that seems to shew no great respect, certainly not to attribute any excellence to that order. "*Post veteres hæreses invecta etiam modo hæresis est, non ab episcopis, seu presbyteris, sed a quibusdam veluti monachis, quæ contra Dei gratiam, &c.*" *De gestis Pelagii*, § 61.

beginning of the fifth century, first took upon himself to advance and to teach, that man, by his natural powers, as he is born into the world, is fully able to work out his salvation; that the divine grace therefore, although it be useful and convenient, is not necessary: thus materially weakening the foundations of our faith, and taking away one of the strongest motives, by which we are drawn to prayer and devotion.

This was an error so palpable and so material, that the refutation of it admitted of no delay, nor was attended with any great difficulty. From the plain words of Scripture, as well as from the writings of the primitive Fathers, as far as they had been led to express themselves on the subject, it was shewn, that the assistance of God's spirit was required even in our very first endeavours after righteousness, that without that we were unable, not only to accomplish, but to begin upon any good work. So evidently false indeed was this doctrine of Pelagius, that, in the course of the Controversy, he was fain very much to soften it, and even to contradict himself.(15) And by those who fol-

(15) This is so much the case, that the last editor of Austin (the Antwerp), strongly contends that Pelagius's opinions were very much misrepresented. However that be, he certainly did on more than one occasion pointedly condemn and anathematize the opinions which go under his name. Thus in the synod of Diospolis, he anathematized several positions of Celestius. Aug. de gest. Pelag. c. xiv. § 30.; as also those who should say "absque adjutorio Dei posse hominem ad perfectum omnium venire virtutum." Ib. § 37. So in the treatise "De gratiâ Christi," at the outset Austin states, on the authority of those whom he is addressing, that Pelagius said in their hearing, "Anathema qui vel sentit vel dicit gratiam Dei quâ Christus venit in hunc mundum peccatores salvos facere non solum per singulas horas, aut per singula momenta, sed etiam per singulos actus non esse necessariam, et qui hanc conantur auferre pœnas sortiantur æternas." See as to this Vossius *Histor. Controvers.*, &c. lib. iii. part ii. thes. i. which begins "Pelagius nec idem semper de gratiâ sensit, nec dixit," &c. See also Usher's *Britannic. Ecclesiar. Antiquit.* p. 127 et seq. where he calls Pelagius "versipellem hæreticum."

lowed him, it was so modified and explained as hardly to be a fit subject for reprehension. And accordingly the Semipelagians, even in those days, were never treated as Heretics, but only as men who were in an error, evidently not of a dangerous kind.(16)

The answer which I have stated as given to this doctrine might well have been considered as sufficient, and appears calculated properly to meet the evil which was apprehended. But unfortunately (as in all cases there are ardent spirits who are not content to do well, but who in the too eager pursuit of their object will err in the opposite extreme) it occurred to St. Austin, a man deservedly esteemed, but who had more of piety and zeal than of judgment, to take a more decisive way of putting down such heresies. Having bewildered himself with certain texts of St. Paul, although it is a question, whether he could at all, or with any critical understanding at least, read him in the original.(17)

(16) See Vossius ubi supr. lib. vi. and Cardinal Noris's *Historia Pelagiana*. lib. ii. c. v. or the letters of Prosper and of Hilary, (Epist. inter Augustinian: ccxxv. & vi. Ed. Bened.) and the account which Austin gives of these mistaken brethren as gathered from those letters. He speaks of them as only not having attained the perfection of Christian doctrine. "Pervenerunt," he says, "isti fratres nostri ut crederent cum Ecclesiâ Christi peccato primi hominis obnoxium nasci genus humanum, nec ab isto malo nisi per justitiam secundi hominis aliquem liberari. Pervenérunt etiam ut præveniri voluntates hominum Dei gratiâ fateantur, utque ad nullum opus bonum vel incipiendum vel perficiendum sibi quæquam sufficere consentiant. Retenta ergo ista in quæ pervenerunt plurimum eos a Pelagiano errore discernunt. Proinde si in eis ambulent et orent eum qui dat intellectum si quid de *prædestinatione* aliter sapiunt, &c." All the error here imputed to them is a rejection of absolute decrees: that is what has never by any sober man been maintained as a point necessary to salvation. See also Du Pin *Eccl. Hist. Cent. v. Art. Cassianus*.

(17) Erasmus (undoubtedly a most competent judge), makes no doubt of it. He says positively, "Augustinus Græcè nesciit; aut si quid attigit, non magnopere fuit usui ad Græcorum Commentarios evolvendos." *Erasm. Oper. t. iii. p. 400*. Of this ignorance the Antwerp editor adduces a striking proof, in the notes

He advanced, that not only we had no natural power to serve God, but that the greater part of mankind had no power at all by any means to do him service; that this advantage was confined to the Elect, that is, to a few whom God had from the beginning determined, without consideration of what they should do, to bring to the knowledge of him and to reward everlastingly: while all the rest were left utterly destitute of the power of drawing near to him, or of avoiding that everlasting misery to which they were from the beginning absolutely and unconditionally reserved. (18)

upon Genesis, lib. i. c. ii. where Austin says "His respondemus Deum in principio fecisse cœlum et terram, non in principio rerum, sed in Christo. Dominus enim, cum eum Judæi interrogassent quis esset, respondit, *Principium*, quia et loquor vobis." The editor observes, "Locus est Joannis viii. 25. Sed erravit Augustinus deceptus versione Latinâ, si enim Græcè tum legisset, vidisset Christum dicere accusativo casu τῇ ἀρχῇ, ac proinde non posse hoc haberi pro Christi nomine." Append. Augustin. p. 484. See also another glaring instance, p. 497.

(18) See Vossius ubi supr. lib. vi. thes. x. which begins "Cæterum Augustinus, ut fortius premeret Pelagium, communi Patrum et a se jam Episcopo defensæ sententiæ appendicem hanc annexuit, quod gratia uni præ altero offeratur, id ab absoluto Dei decreto provenire, &c." Note too what he says lower down. "Quæstio est cur vocatorum unus præ altero convertatur. Patres ante Augustinum, et ipse prius Augustinus contenti fuissent dicere id esse a recto usu liberi arbitrii, &c." See also the theses following respecting Perseverance, and how far and by whom this appendix or "additamentum," to the previously current doctrine was received. See also Augustin's own account in the passage next cited. "Quid autem coegit loca scripturarum quibus Prædestinatio commendata est copiosius et enucleatius isto nostro labore defendi, nisi quod Pelagiani dicunt gratiam Dei secundum merita nostra dari, quid quod est aliud quam gratiæ omnino negatio?" De dono Persever. ubi infr. I am afraid, however, that there is but too much reason to believe with the Antwerp editor, that there was much of private pique in Austin's opposition to Pelagius. This editor goes on after the passage cited in note (13.) "Imo vero fortasse nunquam ita invecus in eas (that is, the Pelagian doctrines), fuisset, nisi Pelagius aliquid in ejus scriptis carpsisset. In libro *De Dono Perseverantiæ*, Cap. xx. § 53, narrat his verbis primam in Pelagium indignandi occasionem." "Quid eorum opusculorum frequentius et delectabilius innotescere potuit quàm libri confessionum

: This first promulgation of the Predestinarian system was not, however, received with universal or even general assent. Many thought that whatever reason there might be in it, there was no necessity for bringing it forward; to others it appeared evidently to have no foundation but in God's foreknowledge: while all, and even Austin himself, shewed a reluctance to dwell upon that part of the decree which concerned the Reprobate. Thus it was that the doctrine, although accredited, and having gained a sort of established footing in the writings of Austin and others, was suffered in a manner to sleep without being of material prejudice to the cause of religion; and so continued for three centuries after. (19)

About the middle of the ninth century, however, we have what I may call a second epoch.

It was then that Gotescalc, a monk also, who we are told was destined to a convent before he could have an opinion of his own, who would have retracted but was not allowed to do it, whose mind therefore had naturally become doubly impatient and restless, and prepared for every extreme, started up, and again brought forth into notice St. Austin's doctrine, but without any of his qualifications. He displayed to view, and taught the tenet of Reprobation in its most absolute sense, and dressed out in all the horrors with which it teems. Thus nakedly presented to the sight, it caused immediate

meorum? cum et ipsos ediderim antequam Pelagiana hæresis extitisset, in eis certé dixi, Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis." (Austin says this as shewing that his thoughts on predestination were not newly taken up), "*quæ mea verba Pelagius, Romæ cum a quodam fratre et coepiscopo meo fuissent eo præsentè commemorata, ferre non potuit et contradicens aliquanto commotius, pæne cum eo qui illa commemoraverat litigavit."* "Hinc," the editor goes on, "*prima origo mali, nam nihil magis irritabile scriptoribus, qui pro scriptis postea tanquam pro aris et focis pugnant."* Appx. August. p. 536. Let the reader compare this with the beginning of the Arian controversy.

(19) See additional note (C.)

and almost universal disgust; and the man was not only condemned as being in a dangerous error, and even a blasphemer, but cruelly persecuted; and although afterwards some persons of note were found to support his cause, he continued under the sentence of condemnation, and was in confinement nearly, if not quite, to the time of his death.(20)

From that time to the æra of the Reformation, the dispute was confined to the schools: There, as the authority of St. Austin was great, this, among his other tenets, was frequently agitated, and became in some degree a party question. The Dominicans, with Thomas Aquinas at their head, maintained absolute decrees in their strictest form; while the Franciscans following the opinions of Scotus, were of a different and more mitigated sentiment.(21)

While however these debates were going on in the cloyster, the practice of the Church of Rome

(20) For this see Vossius ubi supr. lib. vii. part. iv. Before I quit this very respectable writer, I must observe, that he seems to have incurred some odium, perhaps some danger, by his book, on account of the candour with which he has stated the doctrines of the church before Austin, and the earlier opinions of Austin himself. He therefore, as I conjecture, found it prudent to make a formal profession of his agreeing to the tenets of the synod of Dort, which had sat in the mean time, and in contemplation of which his book had originally been written. See his treatise *De Historicis Latinis*. lib. ii. c. 17, which our Usher (a most strenuous predestinarian), takes great care to bring forward. See *Usserii Britannicæ Ecclesiæ Antiquit.* Ed. 2dæ p. 189, where the reader may find the history of Pelagius given in the true spirit of an adversary. See also as to Gotescalc, and the whole controversy as carried on in that age, *Du Pin Eccl. Hist.* vol. vii. c. 2.

(21) That in fact, there was no marked distinction between the doctors of the Romish church and the first Reformers on the subject in question, is clearly shewn by Le Blanc in his *Theses Theologicæ*. The third edition of which was printed at London, in the year 1683, in fol. See also a tract of Dean Tucker's, "Letter to Dr. Kippis, occasioned by his vindication of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers." Printed by Raikes, Gloucester, 1773. Where the reader will find much information very clearly delivered.

was notoriously abhorrent from any such doctrine. She held not only that men might have such merits, as entitled them to salvation, but that they might have even a surplusage of this claim, arising from the good works which they had done. She determined particularly that this was the case with all those whom she declared to be Saints ; and upon that, founded, as you know, her doctrine of indulgences and pardons, which by the application of these works, as they were called, of supererogation, might be secured for those whom she might deem worthy of that benefit.(22)

The length to which in fact this corrupt system was pushed, and the scandalous traffic in Indulgences which followed, you may recollect, revolted mens' minds to such a degree, that when Luther rose up in opposition to them, he was heard with much favour, and soon met with powerful support. Unfortunately this great man having been early conversant in the works of St. Austin, had deeply imbibed his doctrine, and in combating an error somewhat similar, though more abusive in practice, than that of Pelagius, was also hurried into the opposite extreme. He went on indeed in the most formal manner to deny the existence of Free-will in man.(23) In all this he was followed by Calvin, who not having, as Luther is understood to have done,(24) at all changed his opinion, but maintained it to the last, even to the full extent in which it was held by Gotescalc, is considered as the great teacher of absolute decrees in modern times; so

(22) Those who may wish for more particular information on the subject of Indulgences, I beg leave to refer to my Supplement to the Reply to Dr. Milner, lately published.

(23) See additional note (D.)

(24) In consequence of which the Lutheran church is not at this day predestinarian, nor I believe, properly speaking, ever was, that is from the time of its being regularly established. See also Dr. Laurence's Bampton Lectures, p. 249.

much so, as for them to go commonly under his name.

I have set before you this short sketch of the different æras, as they may be called, of the Calvinistic Doctrine, because I think that it will assist us in estimating its merits, as well as accounting for its prevalence, and for the credit which it has obtained at different periods. You see it in its origin brought forward for the mere purpose of silencing an antagonist: Even then doubtfully entertained by the generality of Christians, and languishing, as I may say, in a sort of obscurity for a considerable period. When afterwards it rises again into notice, you find one part of it, which yet Calvin states most truly to be inseparable from the rest, the tenet of unconditional reprobation, most pointedly, in the person of Gotescalc, condemned; and the whole withdrawing again, as it were, into holes and corners, and disregarded in practice. When afterwards, at the distance of a thousand years from its first promulgation, it springs forth into credit and acquires strength, it is only from a consideration of the very mischievous errors to which it is opposed. We shall also find throughout (I will add) the same variableness and inconsistencies in those who maintain it; the same backwardness to give it its full extent; and in many, and the sounder part, even of those who go all lengths, the same consciousness that it is a doctrine pregnant with abuses, and peculiarly liable to be misunderstood.

And, indeed, who can deny that of this doctrine of absolute decrees Antinomianism with all its abominations, is a legitimate offspring? When a man is told that his salvation or perdition in no respect depends upon his exertions; but that if he be not by the Decree which is gone out before the ages elect, he must be lost, however he may strive; while if he be among the favoured number, nothing can prevent his being saved; what should follow

but a total indifference to his manner of life, and every sort of extravagance, both in word and deed? (25) Nay, do we not know and see that such is the fact? I am aware, indeed, (and must say it is wonderful that it should be so) that the doctrine is held by many pious and worthy men who shew plainly by their conduct that they hold in abhorrence any such consequences. Upon individuals, therefore, we must be very cautious how we charge them, but to divest the doctrine itself of them, I will venture to say is beyond the art of man. (26).

It is affirmed, however, and that most positively, that this is scriptural doctrine. (27) It has also been asserted, that it is the language of our Church; but this has been of late so completely refuted (here, indeed, as well as elsewhere) (28), that I need not trouble you further on that head.

(25) Austin gives us a striking example of this, and one that might have startled a less sturdy predestinarian than he. "Fuit," says he, "quidam in nostro Monasterio, qui, corripientibus fratribus cur quædam non facienda faceret, et facienda non faceret, respondabat, 'Qualiscunque nunc sum, talis ero qualem me Deus futurum esse præcivit.' Qui profecto et verum dicebat, et hoc vero non proficiebat in bonum, sed usque adeo profecit in malum, ut desertâ monasterii societate fieret canis reversus ad vomitum. Et tamen adhuc qualis futurus sit incertum est." (He is not, we see, wholly given up in favour of his tenets.) August. de dono perseverant, c. xv. § 38. The conclusion which he goes on to draw, does not seem to be exactly that which should naturally follow. "Nunquid ergo propter hujusmodi animas ea quæ de præscientiâ Dei vera dicuntur, vel neganda sunt vel tacenda? tunc scilicet, quando si non dicantur in alios itur errores?" Here the question is begged in two ways: first, that absolute predestination (for that is what is here meant by "præscientiâ") is the true doctrine: and next, that it preserves men from error. The contrary to which we affirm, and indeed, that it rather leads men into error, is clearly shewn by the very instance here adduced.

(26) See additional note (E.) (27) See additional note (F.)

(28) In the bishop of Lincoln's Charges already alluded to, and more at large by Mr. Daubeny and by Dr. Laurence in his Bampton Lectures (a work which those who have carped at Mr. Daubeny have very prudently abstained from noticing). See also some articles in the British Critic and other Reviews, and Dean Tucker's letter to Dr. Kippis before referred to.

With respect to the passages of Scripture commonly cited on these occasions, I must, however, say a few words. In the first place, I presume, that we must deal with the Scripture as we do with other books. And should we not, in all cases, look to the general scope and purport of any writing? Must we not also, in case of any difficulty arising, any seeming contradiction offering itself, take that meaning which best accords with the manifest intent of the whole; which is agreeable to the greatest number of other passages, particularly such passages as are clear, and subject to no manner of doubt?

Now then, apply this rule to the Scripture. How many hundreds, nay thousands of texts are there, which necessarily presuppose in us a power to choose between good and evil? which speak to us as accountable creatures? which treat our disobedience as a wilful crime? Shall we pass by all these, shall we deprive them of all effect, merely on account of two or three doubtful expressions used in the course of a particular argument on a particular subject, and with a particular people? Would there be common sense in this (29).

But what after all are these expressions? In the first place let us consider the occasion of St. Paul's writing his epistle to the Romans, as well as that to the Galatians. The latter, it may be observed, was written to put down an error in practice. The former was actually drawn up in opposition to a system of absolute decrees. It was St. Paul's object to convince the Jews that God had not, unconditionally and exclusively of all others, called them to salvation. Nay, he tells them, that they had forfeited the privileges which they enjoyed in that respect by wilful disobedience, by not fulfilling the terms of the covenant (30). Can it be supposed

(29) See additional note (G.)

(30) This is distinctly stated by Calvin himself, in the argu-

that he would do this by setting up another sort of unconditional predestination? Will it also be argued, that the Galatians would be prevented from circumcising themselves, or putting their trust in legal observances, by being told of absolute election and reprobation? Indeed it has been clearly shewn, that all the decrees which are there spoken of relate only to God's temporal dealings with the Jews as a nation; or rather to those external graces, to those privileges or advantages, in respect of spiritual blessings, which they enjoyed for the good of the whole, and which were now communicated to the Gentiles also: which of course he might dispense in his good time, and as he saw to be fitting. And to this the case put of Jacob and Esau has a direct reference (31).

ment to the epistle to the Romans. "*Hic primum docet jure fæderis nihil præcellere aliis, quando suâ perfidiâ (note this, suâ perfidiâ, not by any absolute decree-) ab illo desciverint.*" Oper. t. vii. Again, in another place, "*Origo hujus disputationis erat ex superbiâ fallacique gloriaione Judaici populi: nam quum sibi ecclesiæ nomen assererent, volebant a suo arbitrio pendere fidem evangelii*" Instit. lib. iii. c. 22. § 4.

(31) For they were the heads of nations;—and this was expressly revealed to Rebekah before they were born. "And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Gen. xxv. 23. It should not be forgotten also, that the birthright which Esau forfeited, was this privilege of being the head of the people through which the blessing promised to Abraham should be transmitted. And Esau was well aware of this, and that it was not any thing which was to be enjoyed by him personally. And this is the meaning of those words of his, "Behold I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" It was not that in a house like Isaac's he could be dying for want of refreshment (as is well observed by Patrick), but that, making light of, or despising such a privilege, he preferred the gratifying of a present appetite. Isaac too, in wishing still to give the blessing to Esau, was acting against the declared will of God; and this justified Rebekah in the sleight which she put upon him, and in which too she probably acted by a divine command. Add too, that both Austin and Calvin admit that Esau was rejected, through his own fault. See

True it is, that in remonstrating with the Jews upon the claim of merit which they set up for themselves, the apostle uses strong language; nothing however, which can be taken to mean that God, for any purpose of his, made men wicked, or inevitably caused them to be so; but only that he makes use of wicked men, according to his wisdom, in accomplishing the counsels of his providence. This, and this only, is affirmed with respect to Pharaoh (32). As to the simile of the Potter, let it be observed, that it is not St. Paul's own, but taken from Isaiah and Jeremiah; nor will it be pretended that in those prophets it has any thing to do with absolute decrees (33). But further, consider what it is that the Potter does? He does not, you will recollect, make the clay: he finds it, and employs it according to what best answers his pur-

Austin Quæst. ad Simplic. lib. i. qu. xi. "Noluit ergo Esau et non cucurrit: sed et si voluisset et cucurrisset Dei adjutorio pervenisset, &c." Calvin's words are very strong: "Vitio suo et culpâ, fateor, exciderunt ab adoptione Ismael, Esau, et similes; quia apposita erat conditio ut fideliter colerent Dei fœdus, quod perfidi violârunt." Inst. lib. iii. c. xxi. §. 6. Here we find both that wilful sin is the cause of a man's rejection, and that his acceptance depends upon the observance of conditions.

(32) Such is the true meaning of "I have raised thee up," or "made thee to stand." Austin distinctly admits, that the hardening of Pharaoh was a judicial hardening, which he had brought upon himself by his wickedness, and of his own free will. "Nam de Pharaone facîle respondetur prioribus meritis quibus afflixit in regno suo peregrinos dignum effectum cui obduraretur cor, ut nec manifestis signis jubentis Dei crederet." Lib. de divers. Quæstion. Quæst. lxxviii. §. 4. And in the book De Gratiâ et libero Arbitrio, after what I have above cited in note (27), he goes on, "Nec ideo auferatis a Pharaone liberum arbitrium, quia multis locis dicit Deus. 'Ego induravi Pharaonem,' vel 'induravi' aut 'indurabo cor Pharaonis.' Non enim propterea Pharaon non induravit cor suum. Nam et hoc de illo legitur, quando ablata est ab Ægyptiis cynomyia, dicente scripturâ "et induravit Pharaon cor suum, et in isto tempore et noluit dimittere populum." Ac per hoc et Deus induravit per justum judicium et ipse Pharaon per liberum arbitrium.

(33) See additional note (H.)

pose. He does not do it arbitrarily. So only is it that God, as compared with the Potter, disposes of men. He takes the good and the wicked, and places them in such situations as best suit their natural disposition, and as may best contribute to his glory. He bears with them also, as the Apostle goes on to say, for a longer or a shorter time, as it pleases him.

And, indeed, the passage in which the Apostle expresses this last idea, compared with what I conceive to be a parallel passage, seems to me in a great measure decisive. "What," says he, at the close of his remonstrance, "if God, willing to shew "his wrath, and to make his power known, endured" (observe, not "made," but "endured,") "with much "long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction;" ("fitted," observe too, but it is not said by him) (34). Now turn with me to the second chapter of the same epistle, and mark a similar, though more direct expostulation with a wicked Jew. "Despisest thou," he says, "the riches of "his goodness and forbearance, not knowing that "the long suffering of God leadeth thee to repent-

(34) But rather by themselves. *Καταγρισηναι* voce mediâ seu reciprocâ. v. Rosenmuller ad loc. et Schleusner in voc. Calvin however very boldly makes St. Paul affirm it to be God's work. "Nec vero Paulus ubi asseruit *arcano ejus decreto vasa iræ aptata esse ad interitum*, lenitatem ejus et patientiam laudare dubitat." De occultâ Dei Providentiâ. Oper. t. viii. p. 646. This, I must say, is not dealing fairly with Scripture. Austin here again might have set him right; "Et eo ipso quod ait *in multâ patientiâ* satis significavit priora eorum peccata in quibus eos pertulit ut opportunè eos vindicaret, quando de illorum vindictâ subveniendum erat illis qui liberabantur." And lower down he says, "Præcedit itaque aliquid in peccatoribus, quo quamvis nondum sunt justificati digni efficiantur justificatione; et item præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione." Ubi supr. § 4. When, therefore, the Jew is introduced, saying, "Who hath withstood his will?" it is to be understood of the wickedness committed by him subsequent to that hardening brought upon himself: and so St. Paul takes it, and thus only his answer is every way proper and applicable.

“ance; but after thy hardness and impenitent heart
 “treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of
 “wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment
 “of God.” We see here, in both cases, the forbearance of God spoken of as aggravating both the crime and the punishment of the sinner. In the first case the Apostle, having in mind only to put down the arrogance of the Jew, goes no further. But, in the last cited passage, having a more general object in view, he goes on also to explain what this judgment is, to which the sinner will be finally exposed. “Who,” (that is, God) he adds, “will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life. But to them that are contentious” (mark the word and how strongly it denotes something that is wilful,) “and obey not the truth but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.” Now, can it be believed that the man who wrote this, did, in the very same epistle, mean to tell us that we had no choice or will of our own in what we did or left undone? Surely this is not credible. Observe too, that in a subsequent chapter he threatens the Gentiles, that if they are disobedient as the Jews have been, they shall also, in like manner, be cut off from being heirs of the promise. And as it were, to preclude any improper conclusion, he closes the argument in the eleventh chapter, in a very remarkable manner: “Thus,” says he, “God hath concluded them all in unbelief.” Why? that he might save a few? No: “that he might have mercy upon all.” So strongly does the whole current of this epistle run against partial election (35.)

(35) Calvin however, as may be supposed, explains away this also. “*Hęc etiam modo quod ex alio loco obtundunt diluitur*

After all, whatever predestination St. Paul spoke of, was evidently founded on God's foreknowledge; for he says expressly, "Whom he foreknew, them he predestined;" which of itself would overthrow Calvin's system(36).

Thus have I laid before you, not impertinently, I hope, some observations in refutation of this doctrine of Absolute Decrees, because not only it seemed to me particularly called for at this time, and in this part of the country, but because I conceive the system to be fundamentally injurious to the real doctrine of salvation. Because, as was truly said by that high authority to which I have before alluded, "Calvinism is a system peculiarly "liable to abuse."(37)

On the other, as it were, subordinate, tenets which are built on this foundation of absolute decrees, the irresistibility of divine grace, as well as its inamissibility, I need not now detain you, for it has been truly observed, that the whole system so hangs together, that if one part be overthrown, the rest must follow.

Of one tenet however, which does not necessarily belong to Calvinism, though in these latter days it is almost always connected with it, which is indeed particularly attractive to the lower classes, that which is called Assurance, it may be proper to take some notice, more especially as it is to a cer-

Deum clausisse omnes sub peccato, ut omnium misereatur: nempe quia omnium qui salvi fiunt salutem misericordiæ suæ vult ascribi, quamvis non omnium sit beneficium." Instit. lib. iii. c. xxiv. § 17. And this is the man who, in other cases, insists that we are bound by the very letter of Scripture. In his commentary on the place, he is somewhat more reasonable; for though in the end he recurs to the same "dilatio," yet in the beginning he cannot help observing how beautifully this is calculated to prevent despair. "Pulcherrima clausula, quæ ostendit non esse cur de aliis desperent, qui spem aliquam habeant salutis. Quicquid enim nunc sunt fuerunt et alii omnes." Oper. t. vii. p. 83.

(36) See additional note (I).

(37) The bishop of Lincoln's charge in 1803, p. 24.

tain degree held, and we are reproached for not holding it by that other sect of Methodists, who, reprobating predestination as much as we do, and professing no hostility to our church, do yet stand in most decided opposition to us, the regular clergy.

You must be well aware, that I allude to those who have now, it seems, vindicated to themselves exclusively the right of being called Methodists; the followers of the late John Wesley (38): men who particularly unite with their brethren, of what is now called the Evangelical Connection, in alleging against us the articles of our church, and boast, that out of them they can convict us of not preaching the true doctrine.

To shew that there is no foundation for this boast; that in fact, in those points in which any difference can be shewn, or is pretended, it is they, and not we, who err, must always be material; and I trust it may be done in few words.

They seem, indeed, to have taken great pains to set themselves at variance with us; yet, I think, the opposition will be found upon examination to consist rather in words than in substance: or at least in that exaggeration which always attends upon enthusiasm, and which never fails, more or less, to pervert or distort the truth.

Their great error lies in their representation of what should be the spiritual state of a Christian: that is, of course their own: of the perfection to which they have attained, and the way in which it has been manifested. Their history, as it stands

(38) When this distinction of Wesleyan Connection and Evangelical Connection took place, and how soon after the separation of Wesley and Whitfield, I am unable to ascertain: Nor indeed was it till the jealousy of the Wesleyans, now become superior to their brethren in point of numbers as well as in the vehemence of their enthusiasm, proclaimed the fact, that it was at all known to the public at large. See a note upon this subject in my *Bampton Lectures*, p. 387.

recorded in numerous instances (for they deal very much in biography, or rather in eulogies of their own people) is almost always to this effect. That they were originally, either very wicked sinners or mere formal Christians; and this, in some cases, even while attending our worship with a great degree of sincerity; but that at some period, on a sudden, generally upon hearing accidentally some methodist preacher, they were (as in their jargon they call it) (39) "convinced of sin," or "for sin." And then, and not till then, they became sensible that Christ died for them. Upon this follow such influxes of Divine Grace, called by them "Experiences," that the man continues from thenceforth fully assured of his salvation. Occasionally, indeed, certain doubtings and backslidings occur; but, upon the whole, there is a perseverance to the end in this blessed state.

Now it is plain that this is only our doctrine of Repentance and Faith, dressed up in new colours with the addition of a few extravagances. Repentance is called being "convinced of sin;" because a new term may be made better to accord with their theory of sudden conversions. And to Faith is superadded the notion of Experiences, admirably calculated by the promise which it holds out of distinguished favour, to strike the imagination, and to allure the vain and the conceited, the weak and the unwary, to flatter the pride and the presumption of man. (40)

There is surely great mischief, and great delusion in this; nay, and great temptation to hypocrisy; more especially when we consider, that by their established rules this people are in their class-meetings, or bands, as they are called, particularly invited to compare with each other the state of their

(39) See additional note (K.)

(40) See additional note (L.)

souls, and the progress of each individual in the Faith, as it is thus supposed to be experienced. (41) I say, that this is a temptation to hypocrisy, because we know, and the history of the human mind in all ages will tell us, that in these, as in all other matters, men will not easily bear to be outdone; and it is to be expected, that if at any meeting one of the parties have related any extraordinary experience with which he has been favoured, it will operate as a temptation to his neighbour to come prepared on a future day, with some similar manifestation of grace which he will have contrived some how or other to meet with. (42.)

I do not deny, at the same time, that by these men the necessity of good works is duly and strongly inculcated; but I say that the effect of their preaching in that respect must be greatly diminished by this overweening confidence of their acceptance with God; that the mind which is occupied with this sort of extravagance must be greatly diverted from a practical attention to the Commandments of God.

That now, for these notions, there is no warrant in Scripture or in our Articles, needs no proof. It

(41) "The chief rules of the bands are "In order to confess our faults to one another, and pray for one another that we may be healed, we intend: 1. To meet once a week at the least: 2. To come punctually at the hour appointed: 3. To begin with singing or prayer: 4. To speak each of us in order, freely, and plainly, the true state of our souls: 5. To desire some person among us (thence called a leader), to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many, and as searching questions as may be, touching their state, sins, and temptations." Wesley's letter to Mr. Perronet. See Benson's Apology, p. 195. The reader will do me the justice to observe, that I have taken these people's own statement of their case: that I have not resorted to authorities which they contest: though, I must say, that I cannot see any thing substantially unfaithful in Nightingale's *Pourtraiture* of Methodism, which they so much cry out against.

(42) Far different from St. Paul's exhortation to the Galatians, c. vi. v. 4. "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself and not in another."

might be sufficient to ask, where are any such to be found? But, indeed, they are at variance with the whole tenour of the Apostolical Writings. In them we are particularly cautioned to "be sober, "to be vigilant:"* "not to be high-minded, but "fear:"† and this with a particular reference to spiritual privileges: to "work out our salvation "with fear and trembling:"‡ "not to deceive ourselves;"|| "not to fall from our stedfastness:"¶ All which expressions, and many others which might be adduced, are inconsistent with every idea of this personal and sensibly continued communion with the spirit, and assurance of salvation. Thus too, when the apostles speak of their feelings, the terms which they use are only such as might become any man who was conscious of having endeavoured to do his duty, and entertained a well-grounded hope that he had not failed. "We "trust," says St. Paul, "that we have a good conscience in all things**." "Our rejoicing is this, "the testimony of a good conscience ††." "Here- "in," he says elsewhere, "do I exercise myself day "and night, to have a conscience always void of offence towards God and man ‡‡." St. Peter, too, speaks of "the answer of a good conscience towards God.§§" St. John's expression is somewhat different, but to the same effect: "Beloved," he says, "if our heart condemn us not, then have we "confidence towards God ¶¶." All these passages clearly pointing out that satisfaction, and that only, which results from reflecting upon a life well spent, and agreeing with what St. James teaches, that our faith must be shewn by our works (43).

* 1 Pet. v. 8:

† Rom. xi. 20.

‡ Philip. xi. 2.

|| Corinth. iii. 18.

¶ 2 Pet. iii. 17.

** Heb. xiii. 8.

†† 2 Cor. i. 12.

‡‡ Acts xxiv. 16.

§§ 1 Pet. iii. 21.

¶¶ 1 John iii. 21.

(43) James ii. 18. Even Calvin admits that it is best to look for evidence of salvation to what he calls "signa posteriora," i. e. the

We have indeed, no authority for believing that the support which we derive from the Holy Ghost, the direction which our thoughts may receive from him, and the strength which he adds to our good resolutions, are intended to be felt by us in an extraordinary manner, or to be otherwise discernible by us, than from their effects ; by their leading us to what is upright and true in practice.

Positive and precise to this point is the language of our Homilies ; those Homilies to which our adversaries affect so triumphantly to appeal. In discoursing of a lively faith, our church declares expressly that “ the trial of all these things is a very “ godly and a Christian life.” And after giving a description of a good man, she adds, “ Such a one “ may well rejoice in God, perceiving, by the “ trade of his life, that he hath the right know- “ ledge of God (44).” We have here no reference

works that follow justification. “ Optimum tenebimus ordinem si in quærendâ electionis nostræ certitudine in iis signis posterioribus quæ sunt certæ ejus testificationes hæreamus.” Inst. lib. iii. c. xxiv. § 4. And his great master, Austin, expressly says that there is great utility in our being kept uncertain as to our final perseverance, for that it keeps down our pride. “ Quod autem etiam perseveraturis sanctis sic ista dicuntur, quasi eos perseveraturos habeatur incertum, non aliter hæc audiri debent quibus expedit *non altum sapere sed timere*. Quis enim ex multitudine fidelium quamdiu in hac mortalitate vivitur, in numero prædestinatorum se esse præsumat? Quia id occultari opus est in hoc loco, ubi sic cavenda est elatio, ut etiam per Satanæ colaphum, ne extolleretur, tantus colaphizeretur Apostolus.” And lower down he says “ Quæ præsumptio in isto tentationum loco non expedit, ubi tanta est infirmitas ut superbiam possit generare securitas. Denique etiam hoc erit; sed tunc quod jam est in angelis etiam in hominibus erit, quando ulla superbia esse non poterit.” Lib. de Corrupt. et Grat. c. xiii. § 40. According to him we are to have that assurance only in heaven. The Methodists say that unless we have it here we are not in a state of salvation.

(44) Third part of the Sermon on Faith. The words which precede are also remarkable, and not inapplicable to what has been said. “ A man may soon deceive himself, and think in his “ own phantasia that he by faith knoweth God, loveth him,

to experiences, to sudden raptures or convictions, but to that which cannot deceive us. The appeal is to facts. Indeed, can we forget that in one remarkable passage (and that not the only one) our Saviour expressly annexed the promise of the true saving knowledge, that is, of faith itself, to the keeping of the Commandments? "If any man," says he, "will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God *." So strongly are we invited to refer to our good works as a proof, nay as means, of our acceptance with our Maker.

You may judge from this of the truth of that other charge, equally brought against us, that we do not preach as we ought the doctrine of justification by faith only. And at such times the eleventh article is usually adduced against us. Now, what is that? "That we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through Faith." And we are referred for further information to the Homily on Justification; that is, on Salvation, as it should have been called. Now, on turning to that Homily, in the very beginning we find the justification there set forth to be "the forgiveness of a man's sins and trespasses in such things as he hath offended." "And," it goes on, "this Justification or righteousness" (that is, this forgiveness of sins) "which we so receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits, is taken, accepted and allowed of God as our perfect and full Justification." (45) Now, my brethren, I may ask, Do

"feareth him, and belongeth unto him, when in very deed he doth nothing less. For the trial, &c."

* John vii. 17.

(45) Here I have to complain of a most gross suppression or misquotation on the part either of Wesley, or of his Apologist, or both. In Benson's Apology before cited, he is stating that the doctrine of Wesley and the Methodists is only the doctrine of our church, and adduces this homily in proof, but leaves out totally the material passage above cited. He gives it thus, (and I am

you not preach this doctrine? Do you ever bid your hearers look for forgiveness of their sins from any other quarter, or on any other grounds than the merits of Christ? I am sure that you do not. This is plain and intelligible doctrine. If for the very purpose of raising doubts our adversaries will resort to ambiguous or less clear passages, they must not expect us to follow them in that unprofitable labour. Nor is the Homily less clear as to the nature of that Faith which is required of us. Towards the close of it, we are told in the same plain language, "that it is a true and lively Faith in Christ bringing forth good works, and a life ac-

not sure if in this he speaks after Wesley or of himself:) "Be-
 "cause all men are sinners against God and breakers of his law,
 "therefore can no man by his works be justified before God.
 "But every man is constrained to seek for another righteousness
 "or justification at God's hand.—And this justification or righte-
 "ousness which we so receive, &c." Omitting after "God's
 hand," the above cited, and most material passage "that is to say,
 "the forgiveness of our sins and trespasses in such things as he
 "hath offended," which being professedly an explanation of what
 was the justification to be sought, should have been the last thing
 omitted, and could have been so omitted only to mislead the
 reader, and give him enthusiastical and mystical notions of justifi-
 cation. Another very material omission follows after the words
 of my text, "full justification." For they pass over the paragraph
 almost immediately following, which states that "infants being
 "baptized and dying in their infancy are by this sacrifice washed
 "from their sins, brought to God's favour, and made his children
 "and inheritors of his Kingdom of Heaven." And go on, "This is
 "that justification, &c." Both which passages so omitted, they
 perceived to be clearly contrary to their doctrine of the necessity of
 actual and sensible conversion or "conviction for sin," "as they call
 it. Such is their good faith, even when reproofing us. They have
 dealt in the same manner with another remarkable passage in the
 homily, which shews how little the compilers of it were disposed
 to think of us as mere machines. By them we are referred to
 "a true and lively faith, which, nevertheless, is the gift of God,
 "and not man's *only* work without God:" which evidently implies
 that something is expected from man, even as to faith. Which
 passage is therefore mutilated by Wesley and Benson, for thus they
 cite it: "a true and lively faith which itself is God's work." All
 that can give a check to enthusiasm is thus rejected! Benson's
 Apology, 231. 233.

“ cording to God’s Commandments.” (46) This Faith also I am sure that you inculcate, and, on every occasion, extol. Nor can we, I am confident, better please our great Master than by teaching and enforcing these simple and easily comprehended truths.

All this hinders not that we should acknowledge, what I am sure you and I fully acknowledge, that which is set forth in our excellent Church Catechism, that “ we cannot serve God nor walk in “ his Commandments without his special grace,” and that “ we must call for it by diligent prayer.” Indeed, what is more repeatedly *commanded* in Scripture than this duty of prayer? True it is, I admit also, most fully, that “ by grace we are saved, through faith; not of ourselves * (47).” It is of grace that we were originally redeemed: It is of grace that we have the means of securing the benefit of that redemption. It is not “ of works;” but works may notwithstanding be made, as they are, the condition of our salvation. A favour is surely not less a favour because it is conferred only on those who are willing or fitted to receive it. It is not “ of works; lest,” as the apostle adds, “ any “ man should boast.” And it is, among other things, with a view of shutting out this boasting, which experience shews to reside with religious enthusiasts full as much as with any other description of men, (48) that I have recommended so strongly the attending to that clear line of duty, the keeping of the commandments. Nothing, surely, can more contribute to the casting down of all pride, than the persuasion that we are in all things to consider not any will of ours but the will of God; not to

(46) In the third part towards the beginning.

* Ephes. ii. 8, 9.

(47) “ It is the gift of God,” as the Apostle goes on, as to which particularly see what I have set down in note (B.)

(48) See additional note (M.)

walk according to what pleases us, but according to what he has enjoined.

In this too, I should hope, that we may find a rule not only safe but sufficient for every good purpose. For I am very sensible that it is incumbent upon us not to keep back any thing, but to "declare all the counsel of God." I have, I trust, done it now: it is ever in my mind so to do. But I must remember that the same authority which has bidden us not to diminish ought from what is commanded, has also in the same place and with equal positiveness required of us not to add thereto. † We must, therefore, be upon the watch, and resist any novel and unfounded doctrines. We must believe, indeed, but only what is propounded to us in scripture as matter of faith. We must not presume on an election different from that which is held out to us. And in looking for the assistance of God's spirit, we must be content to receive it as he gives it us, not according to any fanciful notions of our own. We must "do the Commandments and "teach men so *," not by fits and starts, but with a view to "patient continuance in well doing." †

Happy shall I be, if on this or any other occasion, I shall be found duly setting forth that "grace of God "that bringeth salvation," and which is so truly described by the Apostle as "teaching us that, denying "all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live "soberly, righteously and godly, in this present "world: looking for that blessed hope, and the "glorious appearance, of the great God and our "Saviour Jesus Christ." ‡

† Deuteronomy iv. 2.—xii. 32. Revelations xxii. 18, 19.

* Matthew v. 19. † Romans ii. 7. ‡ Titus ii. 11, 12, 13.

ADDITIONAL NOTE (A.) p. 4.

THIS is indeed admitted by Calvin himself, though he conceives it to be no reason why it should not be agitated. He says in the very outset, "*Disputationem de predestinatione, quum per se sit aliquantum impedita valdè perplexam atque adeò periculosam reddit hominum curiositas: quæ nullis repagulis cohiberi potest, quin et in vetitas ambages evagetur, &c.*" *Instit. Christ. Rel.* lib. iii. c. xxi. &c. See also c. xxiii. where he professes to refute the "calumnies with which the doctrine has been unjustly charged." In the close, he cites Austin, as his authority, in a curious passage, where the Saint considers the mischief to lie only in the mode of stating the doctrine, or rather of addressing the hearers. "*Ut singulare ædificationis studium,*" says Calvin, "*in sancto viro fuit, sic docendi veri rationem temperat, ut prudenter caveatur, quoad licet, offensio. Nam quæ verè dicuntur congruenter dici posse admonet. Si quis ita plebem compellet, si non creditis idè fit quia divinitus exitio destinati estis; is non modo ignaviam fovet, sed etiam indulget malitiæ. Si quis in futurum quoque tempus sententiam extendat, quod non sint credituri quia reprobati sunt, imprecatio erit magis quam doctrina. Tales itaque Augustinus non immeritò tanquam vel insulsos doctores, vel sinistros et ominosos Prophetas ab Ecclesiâ jubet facessere."* The passage is very well worth attention. Of those who should tell the people "if you do not believe, it is because God has doomed you to perdition" Austin says, that they minister encouragement not only to the sloth but to the wickedness of man. Of those who go farther, and putting the proposition in the future tense, would say to their audience that they will not believe because they are reprobates, he says, that this is more like cursing than teaching; and he would turn such men out of the Church as foolish teachers, or unlucky and ill omened prophets. Now, I would ask my readers, if this sort of doctrine, thus condemned by Austin and by Calvin after him, be not that which is commonly, and almost in terms, preached by the followers of Whitfield? The reader may see the whole of Austin's argument in the Treatise "*De Dono Perseverantiæ,*" c. xxi. tom. x. of the *Benedictine* edition. He says, this

sort of preaching is "verissimum," yet "improbissimum, importunissimum," and "incongruentissimum." In the close he adds, "Atque utinam tardi corde et infirmi qui non possent vel nondum possent Scripturas vel earum Expositiones intelligere, sic audirent vel non audirent in hâc quæstione disputationes has nostras ut magis intuerentur orationes quas habuit et semper habebit Ecclesia, &c."—He thus refers the unlearned to the prayers of the Church for instruction, which prayers did not, in his time any more than in ours, contain a word in favour of absolute decrees. As to the manner how Predestination is to be taught, or rather not taught, we have further the opinion of Turretin, one of the most learned of Calvin's followers; "Licet vero docendam censeamus Prædestinationem, non propterea fubulam curiositati humanæ laxandam arbitramur; sed magnâ subtilitate et prudentiâ hic opus esse credimus, tum ut maneamus intra terminos a Scripturâ præscriptos, nec sapiamus *παρ' ὃ γρηγοῦνται*, tum ut prudenter rationem habeamus personarum, locorum et temporum quibus proponi debet. Nec enim quibusvis statim et primo ingressu hoc mysterium tradi debet, sed paulatim et per gradus: nec æqué quoad omnes suas partes: quædam enim sæpius inculcari debent, ut utiliores et ad solatia piorum accommodatiores ut Electiones doctrina, aliæ vero parcius tractari ut Reprobatio, nec tam plebi in Ecclesiâ quam *τοῖς μυσταῖς* in Scholâ." This speaking of it as a *mystery* is remarkable. What our Whitgift's opinion and conduct were as to this point, I have already observed in my Bampton Lectures, p. 376, in note.

NOTE (B.) p. 8.

The same may be said of the parable put in Luke x. in answer to the Scribe. What the good Samaritan is there said to have done was no more than any one might do. Had it therefore been in our Saviour's mind to insinuate the nothingness or impossibility of good works in the extreme sense in which Calvin understands it, he would not, one would think, have put an instance so familiar and so easy to be followed, or, I may say also, so calculated to mislead. Calvin's reasoning is, that true it is, that by the keeping the Law we might obtain eternal life, if we were able properly to keep it, but that we cannot, and therefore must have recourse to God's grace. "Negandum ergo non est quin legis observatio iustitia sit, quâ vitam sibi acquireret, si quis

perfectus esset legis observator. Sed quia destitumur omnes gloriâ Dei, in lege nonnisi maledictio reperietur: nec aliud nobis restat quam confugere ad gratuitum justitiæ donum. Itaque Paulus duplicem statuit justitiam legis et fidei; priorem in operibus locat, secundam vero in merâ Christi gratiâ." Now, as to this, let me be allowed a word or two of observation; as it seems to me that the inferences commonly drawn, or intended to be drawn, from these and the like premises, do not properly follow. In the first place, as far as this may appear to encourage an idea, that if we could keep the Law in all its points, we should thereby become strictly, and in the proper sense of the word, intitled, as of right, to everlasting Life, I must deny it. Nothing that we could do could in itself establish a right to such a blessing as eternal Life, nor indeed could we merit any thing at all, as abstractedly taken with respect to God. We must always be, and have been in any case, "unprofitable servants." For, in the instance, (Luke xvii.) to which I am now referring, the servant is supposed to do his Master's will, and yet is called "unprofitable." Our Salvation, that is, eternal Life, must always, and in every case, even that of Adam persisting in original righteousness, have been of Grace. But, if of Grace, God might surely grant it upon what terms he pleased; whether of perfect obedience, as to Adam, or of imperfect, but sincere obedience, as to us. And the latter is, and has been the case of all human kind since the fall, as well before as since the coming of Christ, as I have urged in the text. See also as to this Whitby upon Matth. xix. Nor is it any answer to this that the terms of the Law are express, "Whoso doeth these things shall "live in them," Rom. x. 5. because this must be the case with all Law, otherwise the Law would be radically faulty and incomplete. It must not, in the first instance, derogate from itself, or leave any pretext for evasion; yet this hinders not that there may be in those who administer it a power of mitigation or of pardon.

As to the reasonings of St. Paul, here and elsewhere, it seems to me that one material circumstance has been generally overlooked; where he presses the strictness of the Law, it is against those who prefer standing upon the Law, and in order to shew the folly of preferring a Covenant of Works to one of Grace. His is most pointedly the *argumentum ad hominem*; and so ought to be limited, as all such arguments are in their nature intended to be. Had this one plain circumstance been always attended to, men would

not so frequently have "wrested the Scriptures," (and particularly those of St. Paul) "to their own undoing."

One word more as to the "*gratuita remissio*," and "*gratuitum donum*," on which Calvin so repeatedly harps: Gratuitous indeed they are most strictly, when considered with respect to God who gives, but we must take care not to suppose them to be such with respect to us, who are to receive. We must strive, and run, and labour, or we shall never obtain.

NOTE (C.) p. 21.

See as to this Cardinal Noris's *Historia Pelagiana*, lib. ii. c. xv. &c. and particularly p. 181. (Ed. 1677.) where he tells us that, "*Cum doctissimi fere omnes in Galliâ Massiliensibus et Lirinensibus (that is to the Semi-pelagians) adhærerent, Augustinianam non modo sententiam de gratuiâ prædestinatione ad fidem abhorrebant, verum etiam quoslibet ejusdem sectatores prædestinatos ignominie causâ appellabant.*" And these "*Prædestinati*" were afterwards condemned, though, as he shews, they held only the tenets of Austin. *Ibm.* p. 183. &c. The Cardinal indeed tells us further, that afterwards "*tota Gallia in Augustini partes transiit;*" but with how little reason he says this, or at least how little of certainty there was in men's opinions on the subject in those days, will appear clearly from this curious fact, that Pelagius's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, for several ages passed for St. Jerome's, and was actually printed at first as St. Jerome's; and this with evident marks of Pelagius's particular doctrines upon the face of them; *vid. Garnerii App. ad Dissertat. vi. c. ii. in Appendice Augustinianâ*, p. 258. And to this circumstance Garnier attributes their preservation to our times: "*Eo pacto ad nos transmisit (sc. credula antiquitas) alioquin facile peritura, nisi dignum æternitate nomen mentita essent.*" He had before lamented (*Dissert. i. cap. 4.*) that the Catholic Doctors should have fallen foul of each other without any reason, and when they were in fact of the same opinion: "*Doctores Catholicos hæc regulâ relictâ (that is, certain canons to which he refers) sibi invicem aliquando ubi incallescunt animi vel partium studio vel disputandi æstu Pelagianismi crimen obijcere, et in eo sæpe in quo ambæ partes traditam ab Augustino, et ab Ecclesiâ receptam Oꝥhodoꝥias regulam sequuntur;*" though this seems to allude to later

periods also, and probably to the Jansenist Controversy. However that be, the Antwerp Editor likewise attributes to this confusion, our having received these Commentaries of Pelagius so entire, though not without interpolation. "Nisi constaret per aliquot ætates non satis intellectam Augustini ejusque adversariorum doctrinam, ita ut multi sese Augustinianos esse crederent qui Pelagii sententiam sequebantur, mirum esset eos, qui sæpius interpolaverunt hosce Commentarios, loca illa quibus Pelagii doctrina manifesto habetur, non expunxisse. Sed multi adeo rudes fuêrunt, ut Augustinum merè Pelagianum facerent, et Pelagium vicissim Augustinianum, eaque imperitiâ factum est ut Pelagianismus manifestus correctorum manus hic effugerit. App. August. in Præf.

NOTE (D.) p. 23.

His Treatise "de Servo Arbitrio," is well known. It was written in answer to Erasmus's Tract. "de Libero Arbitrio;" and it is very characteristic of a violent and overbearing mind, ungovernable and impatient of opposition. He therefore runs into all sorts of extravagance. First, he is outrageously angry with Erasmus, for saying that it was not necessary to stir the question at all. "Sed illud magis est intolerabile quod causam hanc liberi arbitrii inter ea numeras quæ sunt inutilia et non necessaria," c. xi. And insinuates, that he is as bad as Lucian and Epicurus for doubting of it. "Totus mihi Lucianum spiras, et inhalas grandem Epicuri crapulam." And like Austin, he connects this with predestination, and makes the same assertion as to the necessity of dogmatizing upon both. "Altera pars summæ Christianæ nôsse an Deus contingenter aliquid præsciat; et an omnia faciamus necessitate. Et hanc etiam irreligiosam curiosam et vanam facis, sicut et omnes impii faciunt. Quin dæmones et damnati execrabilem faciunt." He seems however to admit that it would not be the worse if it were possible, to get rid of these sort of questions, but that it cannot be. "Neque stultus et qui te hujusmodi quæstionibus eximis, modo id fieri liceat: Sed interim parum bonus Rhetor et Theologus es qui de libero arbitrio sine istis partibus dicere et docere presumis," Ib c. xvi. This is the great foundation of all Austin's, and Luther's, and Calvin's reasonings: that the doctrines of the necessity of Grace and of absolute Predestination, are inseparably connected; which connection I will defy any man to make out, as certainly it never has been made out, unless it be by

repeated assertion. Take another of Luther's positions. "Sequitur nunc liberum arbitrium esse planè divinum nomen, nec ulli posse competere quam divinæ majestati!" Cap. xlvii. Here he turns Free-will into Omnipotence; for his editor tells us he meant it, "eo sensu quo se explicat ut per liberum arbitrium intelligatur vis quæ nulli subjecta sit." This same Editor however admits in another place, (ad cap. lxxiii.) that, "Aliiter voce eâ utuntur ferri Theologi;" and, indeed, with such an arbitrary use of terms, what may not one do? Thus again in ch. xlv. Luther positively pronounces that Man "in rebus quæ pertinent ad salutem vel ad damnationem, non habet liberum arbitrium, sed captivus servus et subjectus est vel voluntatis Dei vel voluntatis Satanæ."

Luther undoubtedly was aware of and felt the difficulties in which Austin had involved himself on the subject of Free-will, and was determined at once to cut the knot. The necessity of Free-will was admitted by Austin in the most direct manner. "Quid illud," says he, "quod tam multis locis omnia mandata sua custodiri et fieri jubet Deus: quomodo jubet si non est liberum arbitrium?" Lib. de Grat. et lib. arbit. in init. And in the epistles to Valentinus (ccxiv. and ccxv. ed Bened.) he has asserted the compatibility of Grace and Free-will in the strongest terms. "Si igitur non est Dei gratia, quomodo salvat mundum? et si non est liberum arbitrium quomodo judicat mundum?" Again he says that the sound Catholic Faith neither denies Free-will, whether as to the leading a good or a bad life, nor attributes so much to it as that it can avail any thing without the Grace of God; "neque liberum arbitrium negat, sive in vitam malam sive in bonam; neque tantum ei tribuit ut sine gratiâ Dei valeat aliquid." What shall we say also to the following passage written long before: "Quæcunque ista causa est voluntatis (sc. malæ), si ei non potest resisti, sine peccato ei ceditur; si autem potest, non ei cedatur." And lower down, "Quis enim peccat in eo quod nullo modo caveri potest?" Lib. de liber. Arbit. iii. c. xvii, § 50. Which it is no wonder if Pelagius urged against him, and that he should endeavour to explain it away, as well as he could, in his book "de Retractationibus." Though, as Erasmus truly says, "non sine tergiversatione." Again, "Peccata ut jam disservimus non nisi propriæ voluntati earum (scil. animarum) tribuenda sunt, nec ulla ulterior peccatorum causa quærenda." Ibid. cxxii § 63. Which seems to have been too hard for him to get over, and so he does not take any notice at all of it in his Retractations. But when he wrote his book "de Libero

Arbitrio," he was contending against the Manichæans, which made all the difference.

Where however, as I said before, shall we find the advocate for absolute Decrees that is consistent? This is not the case, as might be shewn, even with Luther, not even in his book "de Servo Arbitrio." He did also, as I have observed in another Note, when he grew older, change his opinions on that head. A certain Dr. Kimedontius, who published an edition of the book "de Servo Arbitrio," now lying before me, is hard put to it to do away the effect of what Luther has said in his Commentary on Genesis, c. xxvi. This edition, by the by, (Neustadt 1691) is set forth, "in usum studiosæ Juventutis." Calvin also, even where he is most vehemently maintaining his positions respecting absolute Predestination, is fain to admit, that without Free-will there can be no sin. "Inter omnes sanæ mentis optimè convenit peccatum nullum esse nisi voluntarium," Oper. t. viii. 630. Yet in the very next page he tells us that God not only foresaw, but decreed the fall of Adam! "Deus ergo Adæ præcipiens ne gustaret de arbore scientiæ boni et mali, obedientiam quam probabat exegit. Interea quid futurum esset non modo præscivit sed decrevit:" that is clearly Adam's sin. Indeed elsewhere he says this in so many words, "Hanc esse meam doctrinam agnosco non solo Dei permissu sed arcano consilio lapsus fuisse Adam omnesque posteros suo lapsu in æternum interitum traxisse." *Ibm.* p. 634. Yet in the same work he says also, "Facessat illa calumniæ de nomine mali vel peccati; scimus enim nihil magis alienum esse a Dei naturâ, quam peccatum, sed homines propriâ malitiâ, sic agi, ut culpa tota penes ipsos resideat:" *Ibm.* 631. That is in other words, the blame of what God has antecedently and irreversibly decreed. I know very well that in a certain way Calvinists reconcile, or profess to reconcile these subjects; but the question is, Do they, or can any man in his proper senses ("sanæ mentis," to use Calvin's own words) reconcile them? Either God in all that he has previously decreed, overrules and irresistibly controuls the Free-will of Man, or he does not. If he does, where is the sin? for how can it be shewn that there is any thing voluntary in the man? If he does not, then we are merely disputing about words; and our opponents are in fact perverting language from its proper use. In either case, to be sure, they are well advised by Calvin, who says that common sense and reason have nothing to do with this. "Cæterum," says he, to his opponent, "tam sublime mysterium," (it is with him also a mystery)" nimis pueriliter exigis ad regulam communis sensus.

Ibm. 638. "Stultescere nos jubet spiritus sanctus," (where?) "tu contra de mysteriis Dei judicium fieri vis ex humano sensu: et rationem quæ suâ cæcitate omnem Dei gloriam extinguit non modo statuis ducem et magistram sed scripturæ præferre audes!" Ib. 646. In which I doubt not but he calumniates his opponent, who never conceived them to be at variance. How indeed we are in the first place to understand Scripture without the use of reason and common sense, let Calvin or his followers declare: we admit no such mode of proceeding in the Church of England.

NOTE (E.) p. 25.

The way in which Calvin defends himself and his Doctrine, is in a great measure by calling his opponents hard names, as "nebulones," "porci," and "impuri canes." Sometimes when hard pressed he lowers his Doctrine to what almost any man would admit: that all things are disposed by the Providence of God." "Docet quidem ubique, (thus he speaks of himself) nihil fieri nisi volente Deo. Interea quæ sceleratè fiunt ab hominibus Deum arcano judicio ita moderari asserit ne quid affine habeant hominum vitio. Summa doctrinæ ejus est Deum mirabiliter et modis nobis incognitis in quemcunque vult finem omnia dirigere, ut æterna ejus voluntas prima sit omnium causa. Cur autem Deus velit quod nobis videtur minimè consentaneum fatetur esse incomprehensibile." Responsio ad nebulonis ejusd. calumnias. Oper. t. viii. p. 619. But what has this to do with absolute Predestination? At other times, when urged with the hard case of the reprobates, who must be lost however they may strive, his answer is, that it is an impudent falsehood that they can strive at all! "Quod autem suas blasphemias longius extendunt, dum eum qui sit a Deo reprobatus perditurum operam dicunt, si innocentiam et probitatem vitæ se illi approbare studeat; in eo vero impudentissimi mendacii convincuntur. Unde enim tale studium oriri possit nisi ex electione? Nam quicumque sunt ex reproborum numero, ut nunc sunt vasa in contumeliam formata, ita non desinunt perpetuis flagitiis iram Dei in se provocare; et evidentibus signis confirmare quod jam in se latum est Dei judicium. Tantum abest ut cum ipso contendant." Instit. lib. iii. c. xxiii. § 12. A pretty answer truly! Take another specimen. "Cavillis etiam ludunt quum Deus omnium sit Pater, injustum esse ut quenquam abdicet, nisi qui suâ culpâ pœnam antea fuerit promeritus. Quasi vero non ad canes et porcos pateat Dei liberalitas!" Ib. § 17. A great comfort this for those who may

fancy themselves to be in the number of the reprobates! The way in which, immediately before, he argues that absolute Predestination is not at variance with the universality of the divine promises, is really nothing more nor less than making God a prevaricator.

The great argument, however, which is most commonly by him, and Luther, and Austin, adduced, is the passage in St. Paul, (Rom. ix. 20.) "O homo tu qui es qui disceptas cum Deo," &c. or (Rom. xi. 33.) "O Altitudo," &c. And in one place he, Calvin, says, "Quasi vero meum sit de absconditis Dei judiciis exactam rationem dare, ut ad unguem teneant mortales cœlestem illam sapientiam cujus altitudinem suspicere jubentur." Oper. T. viii. p. 650. But what has this reasoning to do with those who do not endeavour to pry into the hidden counsels of God: but rather blame those who do? And this is our case; who think that the absolute Predestinarians are themselves chargeable with this rashness. They adopt their system because they fancy that it clears up difficulties. We say that, besides the dangerous effects which it is calculated to produce, it only makes one difficulty the more. After having determined that one man's being wicked and another good, happens by the absolute Predestination of God, when they are asked to reconcile this with the ideas given us in Scripture of the divine Mercy and Justice, they bid us not ask a Reason, for that those things are too high for us. And by way of shewing us how impossible it is that we should be able to pronounce on the subject, they press us continually with the circumstance of the Gospel's being only partially preached in the world; with its having been known at all only in later ages; and such Questions: To all which we are ready to reply by confessing our ignorance, and considering these as among the "Secret Things" of God, which he will reveal or not as he thinks fit. Nay, further, when we consider the different circumstances in which different men are placed, nay, the difference of disposition, which there is in individuals, and how much greater opportunities for attaining the knowledge of God some of us have than others, we are content to refer this also to him, who is the Judge; humbly trusting that all due allowance will be made for the situation in which a man is placed, and the disposition with which he was born, by that infinite Mercy and Goodness which placed him in that situation, and gave him that disposition. What we object to, is, that Calvin and his followers should thus interpose absolute Predestination, since we can as readily, and at least one step sooner, acquiesce in the Counsels of Providence without

that. Indeed it is curious to consider some of these Questions which Austin, and Luther and Calvin after him, bring forward, in order to silence their opponents, "How," say they, "can you account for this, that of those who are justified, some persevere to the end, and some do not? And that of Infants, who cannot have been guilty of actual sin, some are received into the kingdom of God by baptism, and thus saved, and others are not?" In the first of which Questions, they are arguing upon what can never be the subject of reasoning for any man alive; since it depends upon that knowledge of the human heart which belongs to God alone: For who but he can know of any individual, whether he have been justified, or whether he have persevered to the end? As to the second case they assume what is no where said in Scripture, viz. that Infants dying unbaptized are doomed to perdition. Such is the rashness and presumption which arise out of these Tenets, and which display themselves in men, otherwise good, and respectable, and pious. See Augustin, *Lib. de Corrupt. et Grat. c. viii. § 18, 19, 20, &c.* Also de *Grat. et lib. Arbit. c. xxiii. § 45.*

NOTE (F.)

The principal Texts relied on are those in Rom. ix. some of which are examined in the Text. One however there is which is considered as paramount, and brought forward upon all occasions. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," &c. v. 15 and 18. This, says Calvin, shews that God has no regard to any thing but his will. "*Ac si diceretur Deum non aliâ ratione ad misericordiam moveri, nisi quia misereri velit.*" Inst. lib. iii. cxxii. § 8. Suppose this were allowed, it will then remain to be shewn, What is his will? And let Calvin and his followers shew, if they can, that absolute Predestination is that Will, or that he judges without any regard to a man's endeavours. St. Paul indeed concludes from the above, "Therefore he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." But still this leaves the Question the same; that is, What is the rule which he has prescribed for himself? But what, if, as I have argued in note 34, all this relates only to those who have previously made themselves objects of God's vengeance, who have brought down this hardening upon themselves? Then comes the case of Esau and Jacob. God, it seems, determined as to them, "neither having done good or evil," what? why, that Jacob should be the ancestor, through whom the

Blessing promised to all Nations should be transmitted, and not Esau. Why should he not? If one was to be preferred, God must make the choice. He might have made Jacob the first-born, and there would then have been no pretence for any reasoning on the ground of preterition. He ordered it otherwise, no doubt for wise and good ends; even perhaps, among others, that St. Paul might have this argument to urge against his rebellious countrymen. But what has this to do with the eternal salvation of individuals, or God's having, by an antecedent and absolute Decree, determined that the greater part of us should be irrecoverably miserable, without any consideration of our endeavours to serve him? I cannot but observe that in these passages they press us with the very Letter of Scripture, yet when pressed in return with the necessary consequences of their doctrine, and as I may say, with the Letter, they fly off. Indeed if we are to go according to the Letter, how will they avoid making God the author of Evil? There are passages enough in Scripture, which, if taken literally, would authorize such a conclusion. But they justly, though inconsistently, abhor this as much as we do. What Erasmus says as to this is very true. "*Si literam urgeas, Deus nec amat quemadmodum nos amamus, nec odit, cum in hunc non cadant affectus hujusmodi.*" *Oper. t. ix. 1232.* Yet while they are dogmatizing so improperly with respect to this case of God's "hating Esau and loving Jacob," they condemn us as guilty of Impiety, because we reason of God's Justice, according to the ideas which he has implanted in us, and according to which he has in numerous passages not only permitted, but called upon us, to contemplate, nay, to judge his ways. I do say, that as to Justice, there is no reason to suppose that quality to be different in God (except in degree) from what it should be in man; and so we may well reason upon it. But as to his Wisdom and Mercy, combined together, as they necessarily are and always must be, and upon which, strange to say, as well upon his Power, Calvinists found their Predestination; we have absolutely no measure in ourselves whereby we can form any adequate idea of them. It is with respect to them, more especially, that St. Paul says most truly, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out," &c. *Rom. xi. 33, &c.* Before I close this, I cannot help observing that Austin himself in one place admits the hardening in the passage first cited, to take place in consequence of the wickedness of the individual. "*Quando ergo auditis dicentem*

Dominum *Ego Dominus seduxi prophetam illum*, et quod ait Apostolus. *Cujus vult miseretur, et quem vult indurat*; in eo quem seduci permittit vel obdurari, mala ejus merita credite," &c. And it is evident that he means personal demerit. A little above he says, that even salvation is granted upon some such motive or examination. "Quamvis et in hoc tempore ipsa Salvatio non fiat sine judicio, sed occulto," Lib. de Grat. et lib. Arbit. c. xliii. § 44 and 45. So impossible is it for absolute Predestinarians to preserve any consistency! Calvin indeed says otherwise; "Vides," says he, "ut in solum Dei arbitrium," (that is, the having mercy and hardening) "conferat." Instit. Lib. iii. c. xxii. § 8. And in another place he boldly makes St. Paul say, "that God does not choose to have Mercy upon all." "Unde colligit Paulus non omnium misereri quia non vult." De occultâ Dei Providentiâ. Oper. t. viii. p. 636. As if there was any such inference drawn by St. Paul! And this is a man who in this very treatise complains bitterly of those who put words into his mouth, which he has not uttered. "Hæc tamen loquendi formula nunquam apud me occurret," Ibm. 633; and afterwards "neque tamen refugio quod objicit: tantum quod aliter dictum a me fuerat, mutatis verbis malignè ad invidiam torqueri queror." Ibm. 638. See also note (31) as to the case of Esau and Jacob.

NOTE (G.)

It is curious to observe that although Calvin chooses almost always to forget this circumstance when arguing upon the Epistle to the Romans, yet when pressed with other passages he defends himself by insisting upon it; and this in cases where there is really no foundation for any such distinction. As where in Rom. xi. 20. St. Paul says "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall." After other observations, he says, "Adde quod non *singulos* sed *sectas* alloquitur." Instit. Lib. iii. c. xxiv. § 7. Again, when his opponents quote against him that passage in St. Paul, (1 Tim. ii. 4.) That, "God will have all men to be saved," he says, "Quod citare soletis ex Paulo *Deum omnes velle salvos fieri*, quam nihil vestro errori suffragetur, alibi planum fecisse mihi videor. Nam certo certius est Paulum illic non de singulis hominibus agere, sed intelligere ordines et genera vocationum." Oper. t. viii. p. 635. The passage here alluded to in the word, "alibi," is found in his Institutes, Lib. iii. c. xxiv. § 16. where, after arguing upon this text he says, "Nihil aliud profecto significat quam nulli or-

dini hominum viam ad salutem, præclusisse." And lower down he adds, "Ubi clarè apparet non de singulis hominibus, sed de hominum ordinibus illic agi, facessat longior disputatio." And so may we say; for, if there be any passage or reasoning in St. Paul, restricted to particular orders, or sects, and which is to be taken as the Logicians say, "secundum quid," it is most pointedly all that is contained in the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the other Texts adduced by the Calvinists; much more surely than the Texts here mentioned, in which it is difficult, I might say impossible to see, the least ground for any such restriction. And therefore let us hear no more of the ninth of the Romans, as authorizing absolute Decrees. As to this, I say again, according to Calvin's own position, "facessat longior disputatio." Calvin also adds a maxim which he should himself have observed, "sic ergo exponendum est hoc verbum," (that is, "God will have all men to be saved;") "ut cum altero," (that is, with the other text, "He will have mercy "on whom he will have mercy.") "conveniat." How well may we turn the tables upon him? How much better indeed do these passages agree in our way of taking them, than in his! With respect to this, let us hear also a Calvinist, one who seems indeed to have been such rather by chance than by choice; who certainly was not insensible to the difficulties of his Creed, and has treated the Question with great candour as well as learning, the same writer whom I have before quoted more than once on the subject. "Atqui non in Scripturarum particulas quasdam, et sæpe hujusmodi ut de eorum sensu semper in Ecclesiâ disputatum sit, oculos conjici oportebat: Sed in Scripturam universam, ac primum et præcipuè in illa quæ sunt apertissima. Queinadmodum enim fidus pueritiæ informator ea quæ imprimis necessaria sunt, clarè proponit, ut facilè intelligantur; hæc iterat et tertiât, quo si alia excidant, ista saltem imis maneant animis inscripta; similiter summus ille doctor, qui non sapientiâ solum, sed etiam discipulorum amore infinitis partibus terrenos exsuperat magistros, ea quæ maximè sciri vult, et apertissimè ob stuporem nostrum pronuntiat, et sæpissimè ut madidæ consulat memoriæ inculcat. Quod si in aliqua inciderimus quæ repugnare istis videantur; non eo vim faciemus apertæ veritati; sed illa sic interpretabimur, ut ne istis pugnent, quibus undique personat Scriptura." Ger. J. Vossius in præfat. ad Historiam Controvers. quæ Pelagius &c. moverunt.

NOTE (H.)

See Jeremiah xviii. Calvin's Commentary upon this Chapter is very remarkable. I shall set down the beginning, as it confirms all that I have said: "Hæc summa est hujus doctrinæ, quia Judæi gloriabantur isto singulari Dei beneficio, quod tamen collatum illis fecerat in diversum finem: nempe ut essent sacra ejus hæreditas, oportuit hujusmodi fiduciam illis eripi, quoniam interea Deum spernebant, et ejus legem." (Something like this if I mistake not has been seen in certain Predestinarians.) "Atqui scimus in fœdere Dei fuisse mutuatam stipulationem, (nothing unconditional;) nempe ut genus Abrahæ purè Deum coleret, sicuti Deus paratus erat præstare quæcunque fuerat pollicitus. Nam illa fuit lex perpetua fœderis, *Ambula coram me et sit integer.*" (a Condition or Law, by the by, which is almost always spoken of, as having been kept by Abraham;) quæ semel Abrahæ lata etiam ad omnes ejus posteros spectabat. Quum ergo Judæi putarent Deum inviolabili pacto sibi esse obstrictum," (something like certain persons who presumed themselves to be of the number of the elect in later ages) "interea autem rejicerent superbè omnes ejus Prophetas, et polluerent, imò quantum in se erat, abolerent ejus cultum; necesse fuit illis detrahere stultam hanc gloriationem quâ se fallebant, &c." And so he goes on to shew that the object of the Prophet was to remind his countrymen that we are all in the hands of God, to do with us as he pleases. But this was the very case of the Jews, whom Paul in his Epistle to the Romans was addressing. Yet Calvin, aware of the effect of his reasoning, endeavours to do it away in a subsequent page, by making a distinction between them. He says that the doctrine of the Prophet was purposely accommodated to the ideas of the people, because he was urging them to repentance; "Magis esse popularem quia ad pœnitentiam spectat:" whereas Paul in the Epistle to the Romans did not speak in the same manner: "non ita populariter." For which distinction I believe the Reader, as well as I, will require some better proof than Calvin's *ipse dixit*.

There is a remarkable passage in Austin, where he plainly intimates that it is in our power not to be of the "Perdita Massa;" of the clay or the vessels formed to dishonour. In arguing on this passage of St. Paul's, he says "Cum ergo meritum peccando amiserimus, et misericordiâ Dei remota nihil aliud peccantibus nisi æterna damnatio debetur, quid sibi vult homo de hac massâ ut Deo respondeat, et dicat

‘Quare me fecisti?’ Si vis ista Cognoscere, *noli esse lutum* et efficere filius Dei per ejus misericordiam, &c.” Liber de divers. quæstion. Quæst. lxxviii. § 3. I will add a few words from Erasmus’s Paraphrase on the passage, because, for the reason observed in note 1, it may shew the opinion of our first reformers. “Deus non finxit te vas immundum. Tu te ipsum conspurcasti, et immundis usibus addixisti, &c.” Oper. t. vii. p. 808.

Lastly, I must refer the reader to that remarkable passage in St. Paul, (2. Tim. c. ii. v. 20.) where the Apostle again makes use of the same metaphor. “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood and earth: and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore *purge himself* from these,” (that is, from false doctrines, or false teachers) “he shall be a vessel unto honour.” Which, if you will allow an author to be the proper Commentator upon himself, shews that he did conceive that our efforts will have an effect upon our destination.

NOTE (1).

Erasmus (in not. ad loc.) is of opinion that the only difference between “foreknown” and “predestined,” lies in this, that fore-knowledge implies the purpose of God while it yet remains with him and may be altered: and that “predestination” commences when the divine counsel is declared, or any step taken to give it effect. Certain it is that in Austin and others, “præscientia” and “prædestinatio,” are in many cases used indiscriminately for the same thing. However in this passage, where both are used, and apparently contradistinguished from each other, the meaning, one cannot but think, must be different. Either way should seem that that must be true which is stated in the text, that God’s Predestination, whatever we conceive it to be, is founded on his Fore-knowledge. What Dr. Hey has said in his Lectures on this subject is well worthy our consideration. He observes that, “There is really no theory of Predestination in Scripture: there are separate pious References of important and happy events to the unbounded foresight and superintendence of the Deity; and out of these Men have formed theories, but such Theories are merely human.” Vol. iv. p. 25. Most true also is what follows, “Each passage of Scripture aims at producing Faith and Love: and we have no right to use any

“passage for any other purpose.” Very deserving of attention also is what he says, at p. 30, “I have several times said that I look upon the passages of Scripture from which the doctrine of predestination has been derived, as being of the nature of *eloquence*, and not of speculation. And they will be, of course, much *less plain* and perspicuous, because more indefinite, than practical directions, and therefore ought to be interpreted less literally.” *Ibm.* p. 30. After all, we must be content not very nicely to enquire what is God’s predestination. It is easier indeed to say what it is not, than what it is. But we must be safe in saying, that it is not any thing which runs counter to those ideas of justice which are so natural to us that they may be said to have been implanted in our breasts, and to which the Almighty himself, as I have said before, deigns to refer, in his “controversies with his people.”

I had forgot to mention, what is well known, that absolute predestination is no tenet of the Greek fathers; for which Chrysostom, among others, is abused by Calvin. After referring all things to the mere will of God, he adds, “*Multo id satius quam iergiversari cum Chrysostomo quod*” volentem trahat et manum porrigentem.” *Inst. lib. iii. c. xxiv. § 13.* Yet it is evident, that what Chrysostom here says, is no more than what has been said by Austin, nay, even by Calvin, in other places, almost as plainly.

NOTE (K.)

I call it “jargon,” in respect of the abuse of the term, as well as the nonsense of being “convinced *for* sin,” which phrase is almost as common with them as the other. Even that however is hardly a Scriptural term; and in the few instances in which it is used by our translators, evidently means, as does the Greek word for which it stands, open conviction brought about and made manifest by proofs or arguments, not the inward affection or persuasion of a man’s mind: it indeed it do not more properly mean “re-proof.” Certainly, however, considered (as they evidently consider it) as a technical word, it does not signify what they would have it signify, a more perfect repentance and contrition for sin. It is indeed the “Shibboleth,” as it were, of their sect. Yet it is sometimes also used by them in its popular sense. For in one passage of Wesley’s Minutes of Conference, where “conviction of sin,” and “repentance,” are mentioned as the same thing; immo-

diately afterwards the word is used to describe "Faith," also, and that of course in the sense in which commonly understood. "Faith in general is a divine supernatural *ἐλεγχος*" [that is] as it is explained in the margin, "Conviction," or "Evidence," of things not seen. First, "a sinner is *convinced* by the Holy Ghost 'Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.' This is that Faith by which he is justified and pardoned the moment he receives it. Immediately the same spirit beareth witness, 'Thou art pardoned, thou hast redemption in his blood.'" And this is "saving Faith." Benson's Apology for the Methodists, p. 205. This author is, I believe, considered as in the very first class of his sect. After Dr. Coke and Adam Clarke, none appear to rank higher. He is also the Book Editor nominated by the Conference. His Book therefore must be considered quite as an authentic record. In a subsequent part of the work, giving an account of Wesley's Tenets, and the Doctrine of the Methodists as derived from him, he says, "It," (the Gospel) "promises, and God actually gives, *the spirit of promise which convinces the world of sin.*" And after describing the operation of the Spirit of God in awakening the conscience, &c. he subjoins, "This he," (i. e. Wesley) "used to call repentance and often *conviction for sin.*" *Ibm.* p. 244. In the Minutes of Conference, where it is asked, "How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?" The third requisite is, "Have they *fruit*?" "are any truly *convinced of sin*, and converted to God by their preaching?"

Of these "*Convictions for Sin*," and how necessary and even indispensable they are considered, take the following specimens from their histories, extracted at a venture out of that other authentic record, the Methodist's Magazine, of which the same Joseph Benson is editor. "August 13th, 1807, died Sarah Ashby, wife of William Ashby, an acceptable and useful local preacher, &c. When near twenty years of age, it pleased God to awaken her to a sense of her sin and danger, at Chapel-in-le-Frith, in Derbyshire, under the ministry of that excellent man, Mr. Thomas Hanby. Her *convictions for sin* were increased by an awful dream which she had," &c. Methodist Magazine, Appendix for 1808. "Obituary 3. Peter Haslam. He was early *convinced* of sin, and shortly after brought to an experimental knowledge of God in Christ." *Ibm.* Sept. 1808. In Magazine for May 1808, we are told of John Shewell, that, on going to the

" cold bath at Holywell, for a disorder which he had, his
 "*convictions for sin* took deeper root in his heart," p. 221.
 It is not said whether he went at the same time as Winifred
 White. He, it seems, though brought up at a free-school,
 and of course in the habit of going to Church, " lived in a
 " place where thick darkness reigned, and no Gospel ser-
 " mons were to be heard." In another place we have Mrs.
 James, and her late husband, William James, "*providen-*
 "*trally brought* to Pitt-street chapel, at a time when the
 " late Mr. Fawson and Mr. Allen were stationed on the Li-
 " verpool circuit. Under their ministry they were truly
 " *convinced of sin*, and seemingly converted to God." *Ibm.*
 June 1809. Again, at p. 232, " It was under these
 " awakening and consoling truths, that Mrs. Bennett and
 " her daughter, were deeply *convinced of sin*, and their
 " desert of condemnation and wrath; and were encouraged
 " to seek in the appointed methods of mercy," that is, with
 the Methodists, " that salvation, the want of which they so
 " sincerely deplored." This is a remarkable case, as the
 daughter's age was such, that she could not, one would
 think, have known much of actual sin. " It was at the early
 " age of 13, that she found those evidences of personal salva-
 " tion, which she continued to retain in the decline of life,
 " &c." Mr. Charles Kyte's case was somewhat more ex-
 traordinary, for, he says, " I was *only four* years of age,
 " when God first influenced my heart by his holy Spirit,
 " and when I was between five and six, about seven o'clock
 " one Saturday morning, I was deeply *convinced of sin*,
 " while God spoke in awful majesty by thunder and light-
 " ning." *Ibidem*, January 1804. Yet, notwithstanding
 this great step, he continued thirteen years after that in
 a wretched and deplorable state, though with very good dispo-
 sitions. For, although he " had made it a rule on the Sab-
 " bath-day, to go to church at least once," yet, like
 Shewell, till he was twenty years of age, " he never heard one
 " Gospel sermon from any true minister of Jesus Christ!"
 This is their charitable way of treating the regular clergy!
 However, then, it seems, he went to hear the Methodist
 Preachers, at Mr. Ward's in Oxhill. Of course things went
 on better. But what shall we say of Mrs. Eliza Byron?
 " She," as her husband tells us, " had from her early
 " years the fear of God before her eyes, and an earnest de-
 " sire to serve the Lord to the best of her knowledge.
 " This, with the preventing grace of God, saved her from
 " running into those sins and follies which ensnare many.
 " But it was not until she was fourteen years that she was

“ deeply *convinced of the sinfulness of her heart and life,*” (and life too!) “ and of the need of a new birth. It is true *she had not a single sin, in the eye of the world, to be convinced of,* nevertheless she was made truly sensible that mankind are fallen creatures, unholy and unhappy, and that nothing short of divine Power can restore them to either the favour or the image of God. But how to attain this she knew not. She had regularly attended divine worship with the family in the Church of England. Besides hearing, she had attentively perused the sacred volume; had used frequent and fervent prayer and retirement from the bustle and vanity of her young companions.” One would think that by such endeavours the grace of God might have been obtained; but no.—Her friends too were unable to help her.—“ It was all as yet to little purpose. *The good she sought was not to be gained by these things;*” that is, by going to church, by reading the Scriptures, by fervent prayer and meditation!—“ In this distress she was at a loss where to go and what to do.—*At length it pleased God to direct her steps to the Methodist chapel, in St. John’s, near Helston,*” &c. *Ibm.* 42.

I will only add one case more, that of a gentleman, who was *converted* almost without knowing it, or at least having occasion for it. Mr. Lawson used to say, “ that he did not remember the time when he was destitute of the fear of God, and that the Spirit of God strove with him at a very early period. It is about thirteen or fourteen years since he *fully closed* in with the overtures of Divine Mercy, and found redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of all his sins.” After his *conversion* (if any such there was, for it does not here appear,) “ he was upright in all his dealings among men,” &c. which might well be supposed to have been always the case with a man who was never without the fear of God and the help of the Holy Ghost. *Ibm.* May 1809.

Indeed this class of cases, that is, where the parties have from the beginning led good lives, seem to the biographers to require a sort of apology or explanation. Thus, in *Magazine* for May 1808, the writer says of Mrs. Anne Reynolds, “ I am not able to *ascertain the exact period* when she was brought to a saving knowledge of God, yet her christian experience evidenced for many years, *the love she evidenced for God’s cause and people;* [that is, for Methodism and Methodists,]” with her steady uniform life, demonstrated that a real work was wrought in her soul.” But of this more in the next note.

NOTE (L.)

Indeed they seem to be well aware of this danger, but hold it no sufficient objection to the doctrine. In Wesley's Minutes of Conferences, cited by Benson, (Apology, p. 218.) we have the following Question and Answer.—“ Q. Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?—
 “ A. We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence; and, even if *lightness or pride* should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself, [this is the gift of God;]” (What, and when so mixed?) “ but at that lightness and pride, that the evil may cease and the good remain.”

This joy or experience, they teach us to be so indispensable, that no piety, no zeal, no labour in the service of God can supply its place. This is enforced in the strongest manner by the instances put by Benson of Wesley himself, and his Mother; and the reader should recollect that Mrs. Wesley is represented as most pious and zealous, the daughter and wife of a clergyman, all her life labouring to serve God.

Thus it is said “ We have seen above what great encouragement, and how much assistance Mr. Wesley received in his pious cause, from the letters and advice of his mother. It seems, however, that it was not till within a few years of her death, that she was fully assured of her acceptance with God.” “ Monday, Sept. 3,” says he, (that is Wesley) “ I talked largely with my mother, who told me, that till a short time since she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned as having forgiveness of sins now, or God's Spirit bearing witness with our Spirit, much less did she imagine that this was the common privilege of all true believers. Therefore,” says she, “ I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing these words, in delivering the cup to me, “ The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee,” the words struck through my heart, and I knew God had forgiven me all my sins.” Benson's Apol. p. 120. With a reference to this, her Epitaph, inserted two pages after, (p. 122) has the following Stanzas:—

“ True daughter of affliction she,
 “ Inur'd to pain and misery,
 “ Mourn'd a long night of griefs and fears,
 “ *A legal night of seventy years.*”

" The Father then reveal'd his Son,
 " Him, in the broken bread made known ;
 " She knew and felt her sins forgiv'n,
 " And found the earnest of her heaven."

Then comes a climax indeed !

" Meet for the Fellowship above ;
 " She heard the call, ' Arise, my love.'
 " ' I come,' her dying looks replied,
 " And *Lamb-like as her Lord*, she died."

Which is one of the numerous instances of presumption, approaching to blasphemy, which shock us in these writers ; and the reader will recollect, that these are none of those expressions of which they admit the impropriety, and into which they say, that their first founders were betrayed in the effervescence of their zeal ; but what is at this time brought forward as unexceptionable doctrine. This is the case likewise with the account given of himself by Wesley, before he attained perfection, and cited also by Benson, in his *Apolo-*logy, p. 66. It should first be remembered, that Bishop Lavington, in his " *Enthusiasm of the Papists and Methodists compared*," brought Whitfield to a confession, that he had sometimes been too *Apostolical* in his language, that is, that he had assumed a tone which only became the immediate Apostles of Christ. See Pref. to 2d Part of *Enth. of Meth. and Pap. compared*. But here Wesley not only arrogates to himself the same character ; but in his very awkward aping of St. Paul, totally misapplies the words, or rather his parody of the words, of the Apostle. For St. Paul, when he commended himself, did it because his authority had been questioned, and without vindicating and establishing it, he could not do the good to which he was deputed. But the self-commendation of Wesley is all to himself, not called for nor required for any purpose that could not as well have been answered without it. He describes himself while in America, as having great doubts of his salvation. He says, " I have learned, that I who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. *I am not mad*," he goes on, " though I thus speak ; but *I speak the words of truth and soberness* ; if haply some of those who still *dream* may *awake*, and see that as I am so are they. Are they read in Philosophy ? so was I. In ancient or modern *tongues* ? so was I also. Are they versed in the *science of divinity* ? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon

" spiritual things? the very same could I do. Are they
 " plenteous in *alms*? Behold, I gave all my goods to feed
 " the poor. Do they give of their labour as well as their
 " substance? *I have laboured more abundantly than they*
 " *all*. Are they willing to *suffer* for their brethren?
 " I have thrown up my friends, reputation and country.
 " I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange
 " lands: I have given my body to be devoured by the
 " deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil or weariness,
 " or whatsoever God may lay upon me." After all
 this commendation comes the self-abasement part of the
 story. " But does all I ever did, or can *know, say, give,*
 " *do, or suffer,* justify me in his sight? Yea, *or the con-*
 " *stant use of all the means of grace?*" No, he discovers
 that " he is *fallen short of the glory of God*; that his
 " whole heart is become corrupt and abominable; that his
 " *sins are more in number than the hairs of his head, &c.*"
 After much more of this, we find, that though he has
 a sort of faith, yet it is not the *right* faith. " The faith I
 " want is, a sure trust and confidence in God, that through
 " the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I recon-
 " ciled to the favour of God." Without this full assurance,
 it seems, there is no salvation! On the other hand, he
 who hath it, he tells us, is "*freed from the power of sin.*"
 What a pretty encouragement to enthusiasm! and what a
 lively picture have we here of that vanity which leads men
 to be founders of sects. Farther, at page 260, we have
 an account of the same experience as given by Mr. White-
 head, which is too long to transcribe. The conclusion is,
 " Christian experience then, as the Rev. Mr. Wesley long
 " explained it, has certainty in it: if a man has it, he can-
 " not be ignorant of it. But, I must say, that those who
 " have it not, cannot form a just conception of it," &c.
 After this, it may not be amiss, to give some of their own
 descriptions of what this Christian experience is. We are
 told of Mrs. Torkington, that at the approach of death,
 " her very soul seemed to be filled with marrow and fat-
 " ness." " One day," says her biographer, " she sent for
 " me in haste." In an extacy of heavenly transport, she
 " said, ' Oh! I wanted to tell you, *I have had angels here!*'"
 The Italics are not mine but the editor's, who would thus
 mark the passage for the edification of his readers. " I shall
 " soon be in glory! I shall soon be with Jesus!"—" I,"
 boldly says Mr. Gaulter, the writer of the article, " was
 " not surprised at this, as I have known the Lord comfort
 " his children by such display of his power." Methodists

Magazine, for Aug. 1808, p. 371. Of Elizabeth Braithwaite it is said, that "while at a prayer-meeting, the Lord " manifested himself to her waiting soul, filling her with " peace and joy through believing." It is added, " that " from some of her letters, written to a female friend, the " first year of her conversion," (so decided a thing are these convictions or conversions that they date from them) " it plainly appears that she enjoyed much of " the presence of God her Saviour." *Ibm.* p. 377. But upon the subject of a Miss Isabella Wilson, they are unusually copious. Of her journals they give large extracts, which almost rival the visions of St. Teresa. First, however, we are given to understand, that being born of parents that were disinclined to Methodism, she was brought up to the Church, she was " confirmed, as it is called." (Such is the way in which they speak of an Ordinance of that Church, to which they say that they belong.) She " took " the Communion," and attended, what we consider, the proper means of grace. " Nothing," she says, pleased " me so much as going to hear the word, and attending the service of the Church. I was, however, in " a state of darkness with regard to the way of accepting " the offers of mercy." Afterwards, in consequence of her visiting a relation, who, though on his death-bed, was little concerned for his soul, " she felt greatly distressed, " and thereupon the Lord most graciously manifested his " love to her soul. I prayed to the Lord," says she, " and " at that moment he gave me to see that I was wretched, " miserable, poor, blind, and naked. I no sooner saw " myself in this dreadful state, than I was directed" (How?) " to look to Jesus, and was enabled to cast myself upon him " just as I was," &c. *Ibm.* p. 375. After this (at p. 412. *Mag.* for Sept.) it is said, " she had some opportunities of " attending the means of grace, and formed a fuller acquaintance with the people of God." Thus it is, that they always speak of themselves. The consequence which ensued was a great increase of familiarity with her Saviour. He is now "*my* Jesus." " My Jesus was " with me in the furnace, and brought me out, &c. By " it I was brought into a closer communion with God," p. 414. " I cannot distrust *my* Jesus, who has dealt so " lovingly with me, &c." *Mag.* for Oct. p. 465. At p. 468, we have a prayer of hers, in which is this curious passage: " My little vessel is as full as it can hold, and I " would pour out all my fulness before thee, that my heart " may become capable of receiving more and more."

Again, in Mag. for Nov. p. 516, she is introduced as saying:—

“ While my Jesus is nigh,
 “ Who shall violate my rest:
 “ Sin, earth, and hell, I now defy,
 “ I lean upon my Saviour’s breast.”

Lower down, we have “ The friendship of Jesus, whose love is unspeakable, is my joy, &c.” Her Journal goes on, “ May 14. Blessed be the Lord God of all my mercies for his unbounded love to me, *who am the least of all saints,*” p. 517. “ My God is with me every step I take. Oh! may I be ever devoted to this lover of my soul,” &c. p. 518. Again, in Mag. for Dec. p. 565, “ Satan comes, and wants entrance, but my Jesus keeps his abode. Last Friday was a blessed day to my soul. Heaven and Jesus were very precious; I feel I abide in him, but I want a closer abiding in him, &c.” Then, at p. 567, comes a compliment to the preachers. “ I had an opportunity of hearing that man of God, Mr. ———. The word was marrow and fatness to my soul. How is it, Lord, that all thy servants are not as flames of fire in thy hand? How soon then would England feel the blessed effects! O Jesus, take to thee thy great power, &c. teach them to come *more to the tree of life* than to that of knowledge!” Lastly, in the Appendix, p. 596, we have Satan brought in again with more profaneness. “ Though Satan tries by every means to stop me in my heavenly way, he cannot. My Jesus helps me, and I tread him under my feet. It is true he sometimes *bruises my heel,* but I am more than ever determined to *bruise his head.*” This application to themselves of prophecies relating to our Saviour is not uncommon. Wesley used this very passage in the same way. Take another specimen, “ Jesus is the reigning sovereign of my heart; O how I long to be more like him! to be all on a flame with his glory, that *the zeal of his house may eat me up.*” *Ibm.* p. 600. To complete the whole, she goes on to say, “ I feel no ties to earth, I feel *the Trinity* abides with me!” I trust that this may suffice; nor would I have transcribed so much, but that this may be taken as a fair specimen of the sort of “ experiences” sought for by these people, recommended by their preachers, and detailed at their class meetings. For she is called, “ a triumphant spirit.” It is said by one

of her eulogists, what one may easily believe, that "her confidence in the cleansing blood was strong. *I never heard her express a doubt.*" (These also their own Italics.) And, lastly, "Her life has convinced me that we may live pure." *Ibm.* p. 605. Surely therefore I shall not be accused of unfairness in quoting from such a character. This lady too speaks of *their privilege* (for this they insist upon) of knowing that they are saved. Surely too, I must repeat, as I have said in the text, there is great delusion and great mischief in this.

Since the above was written I have received the Magazine for August last, and there I find mention of two other saints of much the same water. Of one of them we are told that, when on her death-bed, her exclamations were, "The Lord is mine; a very present help in trouble. O my Jesus, my dear Jesus!"—The other was still more familiar. Having recovered from a fainting fit, she said, "If I had gone, I should have been with my Jesus. I love him; I love him, because he first loved me. *What—my Jesus leave me? No: He loves me but too well.* He has been with me every moment." *Meth. Mag.* for Aug. 1809, pp. 342. and 345. It is really difficult to say what should be our feelings at reading such effusions as these. Certainly one would not dwell upon them more than is absolutely necessary, for fear of being tempted to depart from the seriousness and the awe with which such subjects should ever be contemplated,

NOTE (M.)

It is unnecessary for me to resort to quotations, in order to shew this more especially in respect to these adversaries of ours. It is sufficiently apparent, even from those passages which I have cited for other purposes. They continually call themselves "the people of God," and their work "God's work." They also, as I have further shewn, treat with contempt and contumely all the ministers of the established church; nay, and her discipline; while at the same time they most hypocritically profess to belong to her. As to their pretensions and boastings of the good which they have done in converting notorious sinners; I, for one, should be glad to be persuaded that it is so. But I must still remind them that the circumstance of their labours having succeeded, is not of itself a proof that they are right. We find that there were men, who, in opposition even to St. Paul, "preached

“ Christ out of envy and strife; out of contention, not sincerely,” yet not without success; for the Apostle says, “ What then? notwithstanding, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached,” and he rejoices at it; yet surely they were not to be commended who did this. Even therefore if we would concede to them all that they can ask, they might be schismatics and “ contentious.” But, taking it in another way not so favourable for them, do we not know that there were men to whom it was said, “ Ye compass heaven and earth to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more a child of hell than yourselves.” That they have “ laboured,” (as Mr. Wesley is pleased to say) “ more abundantly than we all,” may therefore turn out to be that they have so laboured in the production of a great deal of mischief. And as to the numbers converted by them, it is shewn by Bishop Lavington, that the popish Saints made the same boast and to the same extent. See *Enthus. of Method. and Pap. &c.* vol. i. p. 2. p. 131. &c. which book they will do well to consult who are yet unacquainted with what the first dawns of Methodism were. It may be added also, that this boasted success is much inferior to that of Montanus or Manes, or many heretics in all ages.

Being now to take leave of these people, I must recommend seriously to their consideration the following passage, which to my utter astonishment I met with in their Magazine for June last. How such sentiments or such expressions could get there, I am utterly at a loss to conceive. But there the reader may find them, at p. 243. “ Why is divinity, of all things in the world, to be professed by those who can make no reasonable pretension to the knowledge of its nature and properties, its distributions, and designs? No human service is disgraced in like manner, though the whole Cyclopædia is of infinitely less importance, proportionably as the concerns of time are in the import of their consequences exceeded by eternity. Preposterous as is the professing the sacred science of Theology, by those who never so much as entered on their noviciate, the ridiculousness bears no comparison with the evil of such attempts, and the mischief rises still higher when those professors assume;” [this, of course, belongs to the self-ordained or self-appointed,] “ to be the *only* persons capable and qualified, and require the unquestioning assent of every man to their sweeping claims,” [such as, that they are the *only people of God*, or *the people of God* κατ’ ἐξουχην, and that they have sensible and constant

communication with the Holy Spirit, which, of course, depends, and can depend only upon their own assertion] “ Was it for this the divine Founder of Christianity became “ incarnate, and suffered and died? Was it for this he said,” [to his Apostles and their successors] “ Lo! I am with you “ even to the end of the world!” “ To look no higher, “ was it for this our fathers, amidst tortures and flames, “ threw away the Roman yoke, and disowned the Papal “ authority?” [always preserving the episcopal form of discipline, and declaring themselves the enemies of Schism] “ What! that we should surrender up our judgment and “ conscience,” [to Mr. Wesley and his itinerant Preachers, and Class Leaders.] “ That we should be obliged to have “ the former degraded, and the latter insulted, by jargon and “ blasphemy?” [such as I have above shewn to be prevalent in this communion] “ and be doomed to perdition, if we “ presume to be rational?” [as we are daily by these people, for that very reason] “ No, not in England, in the 19th “ century.” No, indeed! Mr. Joseph Benson; and we thank you very much for this, and we seriously beseech all the tinkers and the taylor and the cobblers and the bricklayers and the handicraft men and day labourers, in your connection, to read this over, and to pay special attention to this earnest appeal and protest of yours! Notwithstanding its bombastic style and indifferent English, there is much good sense and truth in it, and we beg you not to explain it away.

THE END.



2

A S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

THE ARCHDEACON OF DURHAM,

AT HIS

V I S I T A T I O N

HELD AT SOUTH-CHURCH, ON WEDNESDAY

THE 5th DAY OF JULY 1815.



THE INVOCATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY AND OF THE SAINTS,
AS NOW PRACTISED IN THE CHURCH OF ROME, SHEWN TO
BE SUPERSTITIOUS AND IDOLATROUS.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE

THE ARCHDEACON OF DURHAM,

AT HIS

VISITATION

HELD AT SOUTH-CHURCH, ON WEDNESDAY
THE 5th DAY OF JULY, 1815.



BY THE

REV. THOMAS LE MESURIER, B. D.

RECTOR OF HAUGHTON-LE-SKERNE,

AND

Domestic Chaplain to Lord Viscount Sidmouth.



PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE OF THE ARCHDEACON AND THE
CLERGY.



Βλασφημουμένοι παρακαλούμεν.

1 Cor. iv. 13.



DURHAM:

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TO THE REVEREND
RICHARD PROSSER, D. D.
ARCHDEACON OF DURHAM, AND PREBENDARY
OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF
DURHAM,
AND THE
CLERGY OF THE ARCHDEACONRY.

Reverend Sirs and Brethren,

IN complying with your desire, that the following Discourse should be published, permit me to say that the gratification which I have felt has been greatly enhanced by the assurance which was thus conveyed, that you approved of the subject which I had chosen, and that from you at least it would meet with due attention.

“ To be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word,” is a part of the solemn engagement which we have taken : and were we inclined to forget it, we surely could not be insensible to the example and labours (alluded to in the following pages) of our excellent Diocesan, who, at a time of life when most men are only fit for, and only think of repose, has stood forth with unremitting zeal and firmness, in this most unpleasant, as well as important part of duty.

*The spleen, and rancour, and malignity, and even low and vulgar abuse, with which he has in consequence of this been assailed, will, I trust, only have the effect of uniting us more firmly, and increasing our exertions in the support and maintenance of the faith which was ONCE delivered UNTO the saints !**

* Jude v. 3. Not as Dr Milner with great confidence in the ignorance of his readers, has dared to translate it, “BY the saints.” See inquiry into certain vulgar opinions, &c. p. 146, 2d ed. or Bampton Lectures for 1817. p. 297.

The way is plain before us. We have only to fix our adversaries to that which alone can be the repository of their doctrine, their established forms of prayer, bulls of popes, and decrees of councils, and not suffer them to deny or to elude the authority under which they profess to be acting. At the same time, we cannot but rejoice in this strong confirmation of the truth and excellence of our church, when we see that all their endeavours are thus directed to make us believe that there is little or no difference between their faith and ours.

Let me not forget, what seems indispensable in addressing myself to you, gratefully to acknowledge the attention and kindness which I have experienced from many of you, to whom I was a stranger, and from you Mr Archdeacon in particular, as an old and valued friend, and to assure you of the respect and esteem with which I remain

Reverend sirs,

your affectionate brother and servant,

Thos. Le Mesurier.

ERRATA.

- P. 32 l. 9 *for on read in*
last line, *after prayed add to*
P. 34 last line but two, *for "kept" read kept*
P. 53 l. 11. *for deretal read decretal*
P. 61 l. 12 *for groanig read groaning*
P. 63 l. 13 *for disperses read dispenses*

SERMON.



2 CORINTHIANS, VI. 16, 17.

What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said I will dwell with them, and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.

IT is evident from the words which immediately precede this text, that the Apostle's meaning was not confined, or intended by him to be confined to the setting up of an idol in the limited and particular sense of the word, as applied to a gross and sensible image or symbol made with hands; but that he was condemning all religious worship paid to a creature; or, indeed, all worship but that of the true God. For after he had urged the Corinthians, that they should be reconciled to God in the manner which he had pointed

out, by embracing the righteousness which is in Christ: After beseeching them that they should not "receive the Grace of God in vain;" he proceeds to point out, for the purpose of removing it, one of the great obstacles which yet stood in their way. "Be not," he says, "unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"— And then only he adds in the close, "what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"

In the former epistle to the Corinthians, the same Apostle argues with them in a similar strain against this leaning, which it should seem they still retained, to their former errors; and he intreats them to "flee from idolatry," and to "have no fellowship with devils;" thereby meaning, undoubtedly, that communion which the worshipper has, or is supposed to have, with the thing or being worshipped. To enforce this he adds, "ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of Devils."* Now we know, and you must be aware, that what is called here the cup

* 1 Corinth. x. 14. 20, 21.

of devils, was that cup of which the Heathen drank after offering it up to their false gods; and that those libations might be performed as well in the absence of any idol, as in the face of the idol.

But, indeed, idolatry has a very general sense in Scripture; it is often put for an undue devotion to even any of our carnal appetites. In this sense you must recollect that covetousnes is said to be idolatry.† And in the prophets it is said of the idolatrous sons of Israel, “that they had set up their idols in their hearts.”‡

It is indeed, I believe, sufficiently understood that in order to give the character of idolatry to any false worship, it is not necessary that there should be an image or material thing actually set up: though undoubtedly idolatry does then receive its full consummation, and appears, as I may say, in its true colours, when that takes place. And accordingly we see that here it forms as it were the crown to the whole, that it is in that that the climax terminates. And, indeed, there will, I believe be found few nations or individuals, which, having adopted the worship of

† Col. iii. 5. Ephes. v. 5. ‡ Ezek. xiv. 3; 4. 7.

false gods, have not accompanied it with some material representation of their supposed divinity.

Still we may conclude, even from what follows in my text, that this outward expression of the idolatrous feeling is not absolutely of the essential part;—for how does the Apostle go on to enforce and to prove the impropriety of this fellowship which he deprecates?—Why, he adds, “ye are the temple of the living God;” thus recurring to what is purely spiritual,—“as God hath said, I will dwell with them, and walk with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Now we may, I think, without any straining, conclude from this that every thing, or every established practice which operates or contributes to set us at a greater distance from God, and to make this union and dwelling of Him with us less close and less intimate may be characterized as idolatry. According to the fair construction of this passage of Scripture, our communication with him is intended to be most direct and immediate.

Should this reasoning appear to any of you at all fanciful, I must intreat you to suspend your judgment till you have heard what I have fur-

ther to say : My intention being, as I hope I shall be able, to shew its applicableness to that species of idolatry which yet prevails in the Christian Church. As indeed it was with Christians that St. Paul was arguing, it must naturally follow that when in any case we have to argue with Christians against the same abuses, we cannot find better arguments, or pursue a better chain of reasoning than such as has been adopted by an inspired Apostle.

In treating this subject, I am well aware that I shall be treading upon tender ground ; and to some I may seem gratuitously to take upon myself a task somewhat odious and unpopular. Idolatry has been so long banished from our communion, the Church of England, thanks be to God, is now so purified from that abomination, that we have almost ceased to think of it, as it is still practised by those who continue to adhere to the Church of Rome. We suffer it to recur to our memory only as a mere matter of history, to be contemplated by us with almost as much indifference, and in precisely the same light as the details of Paganism, with its varied and fabulous mythology. Of the idolatry of the Jews, indeed, the consideration is not so easily avoid-

ed. It is so frequently brought forward in every part of Scripture ; so interwoven, as it were, with the very mystery of our redemption, that although long put down and extinct, we cannot avoid referring to it, and marking it with that abhorrence which it deserves. But of that grand apostacy (for such is the proper character of idolatry when practised among christians) of that grand apostacy, I say, which still walks the earth, and bestrides whole nations ; and which has still unhappily maintained a footing in these realms ; which is speaking a language every day more and more bold, and advancing its pretensions with increasing confidence, it is held by many to be the more becoming and proper conduct to say nothing. For this various and somewhat contradictory reasons are alledged. At one time we are told that the superstitions of the Romish Church are so glaring and contemptible in themselves, that we can have nothing to fear from them ; and that therefore it is going out of our way, and can only have the effect of producing useless irritation to take notice of them. At other times we are pressed with the number, and the power of the nations, or with the respectability of the individuals among us who

profess that faith: and it is insisted that what is professed by such a description of people and of persons, is entitled to respect, and should be secure from attack. Now on the contrary, it does rather seem that what holds in subjection so many, and so powerful individuals, cannot, for that very reason, be considered as contemptible, and not to be dreaded. As on the other hand, that very credit and power, and authority with which the professors of that religion clothe themselves, form the very argument why our opposition to them, if founded on the truth, should only be the more determined and constant; since thus only it can be effectual.

In yet another way the attempt is made to deter us from our duty. We are bidden to recollect, the very serious and odious nature of that sin which we impute; how abominable and detestable in the sight of God, idolatry is declared to be; and we are then told that to throw out such an imputation, not only shews a want of liberality, but is a breach of christian charity.

Now most certainly we admit that idolatry is a most grievous and heinous sin: nay we represent it so to be. But is that a reason why we should cease to lift up our voice against it?—

Grievous as it is, yet the wickedness of the first rebels against Christ, of those who actually “crucified the Lord of life,” was surely not inferior: and did the Apostles, on that account, think themselves bound in charity or in courtesy to abstain from directly and plainly charging the Jews with having committed that most horrible of all crimes; or from declaring to them the judgments to which they had become liable, and from which they could escape only by repentance, and turning to the true faith? Now what should we do if we would tread, as every man should wish to do, in the steps of those holy men?

We do, in fact, but as those who have gone before us in this painful office, (for so I will call it,) have done. Believing, most firmly, that the idolatry is committed, we state the plain facts, appealing to the practice of the Romish Church, to the Canons of their councils, the Bulls of their Popes, to their Breviaries, Missals, and Pontificals; to the authorised and approved writings of their Cardinals, Bishops, and Doctors, many of them declared in that church to be Saints.—As to doctrine, we support ourselves, not only by the words of Scripture, which however ought

to be decisive for all Christians, but by the testimonies of those very Fathers whom our adversaries alledge, and on whom they profess to rest their cause. When we have done this, and by such unexceptionable evidence have established both the fact and the contradiction, what have we done, but what we were bound to do? And how have we been met? It is not unknown to most of you, and therefore I speak it the more boldly. Why, by the most palpable evasions, or by a total silence on what are the real matters in dispute; by putting by Canons, and Bulls, Liturgies and Offices, and bringing forward individual opinions, which our adversaries well know would not be allowed of, nay would be condemned as heretical at Rome. [A] In aid of this, invectives and sarcasms, and the most offensive insinuations are dealt around without measure. A plain doctrinal controversy is made, and wisely made by those who can do no better, to assume the appearance of a personal quarrel, in the manifest hope that the merits of the question may thus be obscured or kept wholly out of sight. [B]

c

See Note [A]

See Note [B]

For all this virulence, the only excuse alledged is, what I have before mentioned, the grievousness of the imputation. It is, it seems, so gross and so unfounded, that it is not possible to bear it with patience. Now we have been used rather to consider that a charge, from being grossly unfounded, is but the more easily borne. When the Socinians call us idolaters on account of our worshipping Jesus Christ, which of us feels at all provoked or angry? That the Romanists are so sore and furious when we bring forward a similar charge against them, certainly does argue that they have not really the same confidence in the goodness of their cause. [c]

Under such circumstances it is presumed that the proper conduct for us to pursue, is, not to suffer ourselves to be seduced, since we cannot be beaten from our strong holds; but seeing and knowing where, and how we are strong, to be content there to rest; to go on, as we are instructed, "through evil report, and through good report;" and not to be wearied or ashamed to maintain those truths which cannot be shaken, and to bring forward again those facts and those arguments which we must be allowed to consider

See Note [c]

as unanswerable, since they have never in fact been answered.

We must then go on; even for the very reason supplied to us by our adversaries, and which of itself might well be thought sufficient. What indeed can more strongly justify even the most repeated cautions against this sin, than the simple fact that it is the sin particularly marked for reprobation and punishment in Scripture, and the apostacy against which the whole current of the divine word seems principally directed?—Think only on the concluding part of my text. Speaking of those who offend in this way, what is the Apostle's exhortation? "Wherefore," he says, "come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. And I will be," it is added, the more to confirm it, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty."

You see that the rejection of this abomination is made expressly the condition upon which only God will dwell with us. Then only when we are clear from it, we may hope that he will look upon us, that we are received by him as part of his family.

There are, however, not wanting many other good reasons. For it was the consideration of this sin, and of the gross manner in which it was practised, which appears more than any other cause, to have weaned men's minds from the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and to have given stability to the Reformation. It may be hoped therefore, that whenever men can be brought to see the question in its proper light, the same good effect may be produced, both in reclaiming those that are straying, and in strengthening those that stand [D]

But further, we shall also find on inquiry that it was through this sin more especially that the way was opened to all the abominations which have abounded in that communion. It was the first great deviation from the truth into which the church of Christ was betrayed; and upon this all the rest followed. To this we must ascribe all those false legends and pretended miracles which are for the most part so monstrous and so ridiculous in themselves, and which have even by that ministered such a handle to our common adversaries for calling into question the real and true miracles which are recorded in ho-

See Note [D]

ly writ: almost uniformly you will find that the miracles of what are truly called the dark ages, and even those which are occasionally resorted to in these days, have for their end and motive the advancing of the credit of some real or supposed saint; or the recommending of some relique or image, or place, or superstitious practice. [E] The "hypocrisy of men speaking lies" (for such I conceive to be the proper translation of the passage) which is coupled by the apostle with the "doctrine of devils," or dæmons, as the word might, and perhaps should be rendered, is even thus exemplified most strongly in the worship paid to the saints in the Romish Church, and prominently contributes to stamp upon it its proper character. [F]

Need I add that this extraordinary propensity which appears to exist in our corrupt nature to turn from the living God and worship the creature, exemplified as it is most strongly in the history of the Jews at the very time when they were most unquestionably God's peculiar people, is a most decisive reason why we should think no security too great, no caution superfluous, in order to preserve us from falling into this snare.

See Note [E]

See Note [F]

But I advert the rather to this case of the Jews, because it enables me to anticipate an objection which is commonly made on behalf of our brethren of the Romish communion, particularly those who reside among us. They insist that since we allow their church to be a member of the church of Christ, and so a true church, it is perfectly inconsistent and impossible that it should be given up to idolatry. The plain answer to this is supplied by what I have mentioned of the whole history of the Jews: and it is the more compleat, as our adversaries themselves alledge it for a different purpose. One of their favourite arguments, that on which Bossuet rested in his conference with Claude, in order to prove the necessity of conforming to their religion, is, that there had been always, and therefore was always intended to be a visible speaking authority in the church to which submission was due; and that under the old law this authority was vested in the synagogue. [G] According to their own admission therefore the Jewish Church always continued a true Church, and like theirs with a visible speaking authority claiming implicit submission to be paid to its dictates; and yet it is unquestionable that this same visible

See Note [G]

church was scarcely ever clear from idolatry, and that of the grossest kind. And so, we conclude, even syllogistically, according to that mode of reasoning to which they are so partial, that a church does not lose its character, by becoming idolatrous.

I can now only shortly lay before you the nature of the idolatry practised in the church of Rome, and the pretences under which it is clothed, with a few words as to its history.

First, it is practised in the invocation of Saints and Angels.

Secondly, in the adoration of Reliques and Images.

Thirdly, in the Mass; by the avowed and unqualified adoration of the consecrated wafer, as being Christ himself.

Of the latter however I shall say nothing, because it depends on the doctrine of transubstantiation; and I have elsewhere examined this very much at large, and shewn its absurdity as well as impiety, without any attempt at an answer by those who were imperiously called upon to give the answer, if they could do it. [H]

Indeed I have also in another publication said so much upon the other species of idolatry that

See Note [H]

I may be allowed to refer you to that for the deficiencies which the limits of this discourse may make necessary. [1]

The invocation of saints is to be first considered, as indeed having been first practised, though not so generally nor under its present form, till it became embodied, and as it were obtained consistency by the introduction of image worship. The first step to it was that praying at the tombs of the Martyrs which in the beginning had nothing in it but the sort of love and respect which men bear to their deceased friends; and an opinion natural enough, that by the remembrance of men who had so faithfully served God, even to the sacrifice of their lives, devotion would be increased and prayer might become more acceptable and efficacious. Out of this there grew up a superstitious veneration for the bodies of the martyrs and an opinion that by virtue of them miracles had been wrought. This was soon improved, by craft on the one side, and credulity on the other, into that system of hunting out and hallowing reliques, which, even by the confession of our adversaries was soon turned into a source of unlawful gain, and teemed

See Note [1]

with all manner of abuses. It was no unnatural consequence of this, that the religious veneration which was paid to the remains of the saints upon earth should be extended to that immortal part of them which was considered as residing in Heaven ; and that they should be erected into protectors and guardians and intercessors, and that prayers should be put up to them, and they should be invoked in the same manner and with the same fervour of devotion, and almost in the same breath as God himself. [κ]

And this having taken place, the worship of angels followed of course.

But this is denied to be the case, it is insisted that the worship paid to the saints is not divine worship : and in order to shew this, various distinctions have been devised : Nay, a totally new class of worship has been set up.

The Protestants, you will observe, in reasoning with the Romanists, urge that there are only two sorts of worship, the one religious, and the other civil ; and that whatever is not of the latter class, must be of the former ; and that if it be religious worship which is paid to the saints, it must be that which God has forbidden to be paid to any

D

See Note [κ]

other but him. What indeed are his words? "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other gods before me." "coram me;" as they themselves translate it: not only no other gods instead of me, but "besides me" or under me: for even that is implied. "I am the Lord" or "Jehovah," again it is said: "that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images."† When Satan tempted our Saviour, he did not require him to renounce God, but to worship him also. What was our Saviour's answer? not that Satan was a devil, and was therefore unfit to be worshipped: but "Get thee behind me Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and *him only* shalt thou serve."‡

Now what do they oppose to this? Why, it is said that though saints may not be worshipped as God is, yet there is a third or middle sort of worship, which is higher than the civil worship and lower than that which is paid to God. [L] But we may ask, we must ask, where do they find the least shadow of authority for this new sort of worship? where have they found this

* Exod. xx. 3. † Isaiah xlii. 8.

‡ Matt. iv. 10. Luke iv. 8.

See Note [L]

notable conceit which is to make void the word of God? Not in Scripture certainly. It had no existence when Peter checked Cornelius for worshipping him, and the angel stopped John when about to do the same. Nor can it even be said to be properly adopted in their church. The second Nicene council indeed and their doctors and schoolmen attempt to draw a line, which however they cannot define, between this higher kind of worship which they call *Latreia*, and the inferiour which they call *Duleia* or *δουλεία* [M]. But these descriptions or names, with the term *hyperduleia* for the peculiar worship due to the Virgin, seem now to be abandoned; for no mention is made of them in the decrees of the council of Trent, their last and great council, nor in the catechism drawn up in consequence of its directions by one of their saints. In this latter the word “colere” to worship, as well as “cultus,” [N] is applied indifferently to God or the saints or the images. The language of the council also is plain enough. It is there simply asserted that “the saints are to be invoked;” that “recourse is to be had to their prayers, their help and assistance (“*opem et auxilium*,” be it re-

See Note [M]

See Note [N]

membered ; so something distinct from prayers :) and all those are anathematized who oppose this doctrine, and those particularly who say that it is contrary to the word of God or foolish to supplicate the saints either by word of mouth or mentally (“*voce vel mente.*”) [o]

Now, I pray you, what is, what can be divine honour, if this be not ? observe that *mental* prayers are to be put up to them. That therefore which we all consider as among the most incommunicable attributes of the Godhead, the power of reading the heart of man, is here directly attributed to the Saints. And they must not send us to their doctors and schoolmen to explain this away, or to tell us how this may happen, so as not to take from the glory of God ; because, in the first place, there is no agreement among them upon this point, as upon so many others ; and also they themselves tell us, when it serves their turn, that what the schoolmen say is no doctrine nor of any obligation. And certainly when an article of faith is laid down authoritatively, as it is here, all that is necessary to the right understanding of it, should be laid down at the same time and by the same authority.

See Note [o]

But indeed that it is divine honour which in fact is paid to the saints, even the very same honour which is paid to Christ, is shewn not only from all the prayers put up to them, but by all that we learn of the opinions and demeanour of the common people in Roman Catholic countries. Nor can it be believed but that the intention of those who preside in that Church goes along with this : or that they themselves adhere to the flimsy distinctions which they make. Indeed all their rites, instead of avoiding carefully what St. Paul expressly bids us to avoid, the “ becoming a stumbling block to them that are weak,”* seem expressly calculated to mislead the unwary and to confound all their ideas of worship ; so as fully to put God and his saints on the same footing. Even that excuse which they give for their image worship, that it passes to the prototype, has this tendency most directly. For there is precisely the same sort of adoration paid to the images of the saints as to those of Christ. How then are the unlearned (if even we would confine ourselves to that class) to make the distinction, or to discern where or how they are to set limits to, or to qualify their adoration in the one

* 1 Cor. viii. 9.

case any more than in the other? Incense is burnt, offerings are made, candles are lighted, mass is celebrated, full as solemnly, if not more so, before the altar of St. Francis as before that of Christ. What is to guide the votary or suppliant, so that his devotion may not exceed the due bounds or assume a wrong character?

And what shall we say to the blasphemies vented to the honour (so it is called) of the Virgin Mary? She indeed is supposed and declared to have authority over her son. She is called upon to exert it; "*Monstra te esse matrem.*" One of their saints, St. Bonaventure, called by excellence the seraphic Doctor, travestied the whole psalter, into invocations of her instead of God, substituting her name for his through the whole. Indeed in most of their solemn offices and benedictions she is always joined at least with God or Christ; praise is given to her by Bellarmine, together with God, in the end of several of his controversial works. In this kingdom the Romanists are taught to implore her blessings in the same breath with Christ's. They are instructed to repeat

"*Nos cum prole pia benedicat virgo Maria.*"

Where she certainly appears to hold the first place. [P]

See Note [P]

Consider now the following practices. All their confessions are addressed not only to God, but to the Virgin, to St. Michael, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, and St. Paul, and all the saints. And it is a part of the ceremony that the intercession of them all with the Lord is prayed for.

Again, when the penitent is in the agonies of death, they solemnly dismiss his soul (*"proficiscere anima"*) in the name indeed of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: but also (of course because that is not sufficient) "in the name of the angels and archangels; in the name of thrones and dominations; in the name of principalities and powers" (we might well ask who or what are these? for St. Paul classes them among our enemies: but no matter); "in the name of cherubim and seraphim, in the name of the patriarchs and prophets; in the name of the holy martyrs and confessors; in the name of the holy monks and hermits; in the name of the holy virgins; and all the saints of God." To him who considers the full import of using the name of God in such a solemn form as this, how the majesty of God is by him made to rest, as it were, in his name, this association of other names to his upon

such an occasion can be looked upon in no other light than as an attempt to parcel out the divine glory and power, and as a sacrilegious blasphemy derogatory in the highest degree from his honour. [q]

One only instance more I shall mention. On various occasions, the mass is offered up to the honour of the saints ; and particularly, at certain periods, pointed out on their missals, in memory of Christ's passion, resurrection, and ascension, but to the honour of the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, and St. Paul, and all the saints ! so that that sacrifice which was really once offered for the sins of the whole world, but which they say they can repeat whenever they please, is here supposed to be offered to the honour of frail beings like ourselves. The Saviour of the world is again to undergo humiliation, in order that certain of his creatures may be magnified here on earth ! What is this, again I say but idolatry, and blasphemous idolatry ? [r]

Still, we are assured, all this is perfectly innocent. It is all a misconception. The help that is required or expected of the saints, however directly or in whatever terms they are prayed or

See Note [q]

See Note [r]

invoked, is only that they should pray to God for us ; and this is perfectly justifiable, because we are bidden to pray for one another, and St. Paul when on earth bade the Disciples pray for him.

Now supposing the fact to be so, and that they could reduce their worship of the saints to this mere act of intreating them to pray for us, which you must see is quite contrary to the truth ; what analogy is there between the two cases ? In praying for our fellow creatures here on earth, we are not only doing an act of charity, but praying for that which greatly concerns ourselves. St. Paul “exhorts that prayers and intercessions be made for all men.” “For kings and” as he goes on, “for all that are in authority.” What is the reason he gives ? why, a very plain one. “That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” It is our own good that we are promoting in more ways than one. While we are here living upon earth we may say (to use the words of St. Paul,) that “if one member suffer, the other members must suffer with it.” In praying for others therefore, and desiring them to pray for us, we are only performing an office of love mutually and reciprocally beneficial. But when the Romanist

prays to his saints to pray for him, he prays to those whom he considers as beings of a far superior order, with feelings and capacities and powers very different from his ; who have no need of his prayers in return ; nay, who must be endowed with divine attributes, or he cannot have any confidence that his prayer is even heard, or, in the case of *mental* prayer, discerned. How then does the one practice warrant the other ?[s]

But again, we may and we must answer, that St. Paul expressly exhorts us to do the one thing ; but neither he nor any other apostle has bidden us to do the other. On the contrary St. Paul expressly condemns the worship of angels, as did the council of Laodicea after him. If the intercession of good men departed be necessary for us, why have we not been told of it from the first authority ? what need we to do that which it is admitted was never done under the old covenant ? was not Abraham, was not Moses, were not Enoch, and Elijah, holy men, equal at least in sanctity and favour with God to any modern saint ; and why did not the Jews pray to them ?

As to the fable of the *Limbus Patrum*, where all the Patriarchs were supposed to be “ kept ” till Christ’s resurrection, I presume that will hardly

See Note [s]

be urged. [T] But, even assuming that, were not Enoch and Elijah in heaven, and is there not something very like our Saviour's authority for saying that Abraham was there? they surely might have been prayed to.

But there is more behind. By this plea of theirs we are reminded of that which is the most gross and abominable feature in this sin. By it direct violence is done to the merits of our Saviour and to his office as mediator. By calling on his saints to intercede with God for him, the Romanist puts out of sight that one mediator, who, after having died for our sins and risen again, ascended into heaven that he might be an advocate for us with the father. It is mere pretence to urge that their prayers all conclude "Per dominum:" "through the Lord." For first this is not universally true: and if it were, still it is easy to conceive how that which is constantly and uniformly repeated, may come to be utterly disregarded as being little more than mere form. It is on the body of the prayer that the attention is particularly fixed, and there we find only the intercession and merits of the saint.

But even allowing that Christ is really kept in view, why is any one interposed between him

See Note [T]

and us? God says "my son shall be the mediator, and the only mediator for you.*" "True" says the Romanist, "he shall be the only mediator of redemption: but we will have others whom we call only mediators of intercession, who shall bring us to you and to him." For such is the distinction which at times they rest upon. And can any thing be more futile or presumptuous? [v]

But what then is the reason assigned for this? It is it seems, more humble and more becoming in us to seek the aid of men like ourselves than to presume to make direct addresses to God. But now how is this even consistent with my text? God declares he will dwell with us, that we shall be his temple; and shall we fear to come to him? shall we look for any other guest but him? and recollect, that the one man whom he has appointed as mediator, is God also; so that Christ's dwelling with us and God's dwelling with us is the same; but how can that be in the case of any other being? But further, to take away all cavil, what says the word of God? even for this the Son of God became a man, that we might have a man for our mediator. "We" says the apostle to the Hebrews, "have not an high priest which

See Note [v]

cannot be touched with our infirmities, but was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin.* “In all things,” again it is said, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the people.†

How gross then is it, to say in the face of this and much more, that we have need of other men to pray for us and to intercede for us? Is Christ unequal to the task which he undertook, or will he, contrary to his word, forsake us in the time of need? will he do his work imperfectly? It were blasphemy to say so.

But neither is this all. Not only is the office of Christ as mediator invaded, but they ascribe to their saints merits which are efficacious in obtaining the forgiveness of sins. And thus they rob Christ of his glory as our redeemer also. Their prayers in a variety of cases expressly bring forward the merits as well as the intercession of their saints. In many cases they familiarly couple together (particularly in all that relates to indulgences) the merits of Christ and the saints :

* Heb. iv. 15.

† Heb. ii. 17.

“Christi merita et Sanctorum;”[v] what is this again but idolatry combined with sacrilege?

And indeed considering the peculiar dispensation under which we live and are to work out our salvation, it does seem that this is precisely that sort of idolatry which must be most displeasing to God, and is peculiarly marked with a contempt of his word.

Let us only trace the progress, as we may call it, of Gods manifestations of himself. At first, unless we except Adam and some chosen Patriarchs, it should seem that the revelation was in some respect imperfect. This is what we are left to collect from his word to Moses, when about to shew himself peculiarly as the deliverer of the sons of Israel. “I am the Lord,” he said: “and I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them.”* Now as we find the word Jehovah actually used in his communication with Abraham, we must look for the true import of this beyond the letter. He was then to be known in some peculiar manner; not we may say, as in the deluge, only by acts of vengeance, but as a God of blessing and of

See Note [v]

* Exod. vi. 2, 3.

mercy, constant in the fulfilment of his promises; one, as he said afterward of himself to Isaiah, "that speak in righteousness mighty to save;"* accordingly when he declared himself so solemnly against all idolatry by the promulgation of the commandments from Sinai, he ushered them in with a reference to that part of his character. "I" said he "am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."† You cannot forget how often this appeal to the experience and call upon the gratitude of his people was repeated. Not only he told them that he was their God, and that they were to have none other God: but also they were to consider him emphatically as their deliverer, and to have none other. "I, says he, am the holy one of Israel, the Saviour."—"I am the Lord, beside me there is no Saviour." "A just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me."‡ The peculiar guilt therefore of the Israelites in turning to Idolatry and seeking after other protectors and deliverers, that which is most emphatically dwelt upon in scripture, is this, that they thus called in question the power

* Isaiah lxiii. 1.

† Exod. xx. 2.

‡ Isaiah xlviii. 3. 11. xlv. 21.

or the faithfulness of God, his ability or his disposition to do what he had promised. It was committing blasphemy against his word whenever they sought for assistance from any other God. You will bear in mind that their offence was not that they renounced or denied the true God to be God ; for proud as they were of being the children of Abraham, they could never have denied the God of Abraham : but it was that they joined other Gods to him. They had other Gods “ before him,” or “ besides him.” This was notoriously the case even under the reign of Ahab, the most marked among the idolatrous kings of Israel.

Now consider this with a reference to our situation under the new covenant. A new and further revelation has been made to us, even of the mystery hid for ages. We are no longer to look for a deliverance from mere temporal evils, as was the case with the Israelites, (whose deliverances indeed, particularly that great deliverance from the hand of Pharaoh, were but typical of the great mercy that was to follow) ; but we know that that for which all things have been working together from the first ages is our deliverance from the bondage of sin. And

this deliverance has been accomplished by the death of our Saviour, and his exaltation to the right hand of God to make intercession for sinners. It is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." And therefore also he is established as the one mediator between God and man, to whose merits alone we are to appeal. The peculiar characteristic of our religion is then that we are saved by a mediator, and he one. And as the Israelites were called the people of Jehovah, or the people of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so are we called the people of Christ; Christians. Christ is become to us what Jehovah was to the Jews, emphatically our Saviour and Redeemer, or Deliverer.

If then we should ask in what way the majesty of our God could be more peculiarly offended, and his decrees set at nought, surely it would be in the very way which the Church of Rome has pursued; even by calling in other mediators or intercessors to co-operate in the work of our salvation. As the power of God to deliver was called in question whenever under the old covenant refuge was had to other deliverers or defenders, so is the same sort of insult offered to the all-

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* 2 Cor. v. 19.

sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and mediation, whenever the attempt is made to propitiate God by calling up the merits or intercessions of any other being or creature, however supposed to be glorified or exalted.

And it is no answer to this, to say that there is with them no denial, but rather an assertion, as strong as can be, of the merits and mediatorial office of our Saviour; because, as it has been shewn, it is not essential to idolatry that the true God should be denied. This is plain even from the apostacy under Mahomet and his followers. For they confess our God; nay, they confess also Jesus Christ; but they say that his mission failed of its effect, and therefore Mahomet was sent to complete and to perfect what he left undone.

Nor is it a better answer to say that these holy men whose intercession is thus invoked, and whose merits are pleaded, were faithful servants of the true God, and that therefore what is said of them can never be in derogation of God's honour or his word. For can any man believe that it would have made the least difference in the case of the Israelites, if they had erected altars to Abraham, or to Noah, instead of Baal and Ash-

taroth ? why indeed in that case might not they have worshipped angels with impunity ? but this subterfuge never came into their heads. Having chosen to follow after vanity, they did it at least openly and without equivocation.

The truth is however that the Church of Rome in her idolatry has most closely copied that of the heathen. It is admitted on all hands and insisted upon alike by Pagan philosophers and Christian fathers, and is traced and ascertained by ancient and modern writers, that the setting up of false gods had its origin in a superstitious veneration of the dead. All the heathen, those at least who had any understanding, acknowledged a supreme God ; but they would have also inferior Deities, or Demons, as they were sometimes called, under him, who should have a peculiar care of them and their concerns and country, and who received the power to do this from the supreme being. This is even urged by the adversaries of christianity, when arguing in defence of their Idolatry, in terms which might be adopted by the Romanist of these days. [x] It was in truth with a reference to one and the other that St. Paul said “ there be that are cal-

led gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be Gods many and Lords many)" [that is, inferior or gentilitia deities]; "but to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we in him."*

The Romanist indeed, not less than the Pagan, has plenty of these lords or demons: saints presiding over nations, over places, over professions: mighty, as it is pretended, to assist in various temptations, against various accidents and diseases. [y]

But the imaginations and practices of the heathen have also been followed in that which is the consummation of all; the worship of material symbols, and representations of men and women; nay, of inanimate things: for such is the case with respect to relics as well as the cross: to the last of which the highest sort of adoration is officially declared to be due. As to this however I shall say little: for if it be idolatry to worship the saints, still more must the worshipping of their images and relics [z] be idolatrous, and indeed we can have no doubt of its being divine worship

* 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

See Note [y]

See Note [z]

which is paid to them, even from what has been said before. Only it is pretended, as you will recollect, that the worship passes to the prototype. But this is precisely the way in which the heathen also spoke of their adoration of images. They too were not so stupid as to suppose that the wood or stone was their God; or seeing a hundred statues of Jupiter, or Apollo, conceived that there were a hundred Jupiters, or Apollos. This is admitted and argued upon by the fathers; who for this evasion treat them just as we do the Romanists. And indeed it may be observed, once for all :—that for our condemnation of these idolatrous practices we have the fullest and clearest authority in the earlier and genuine fathers of the church.[AA] Nay, testimonies to that effect may be found down to a very late period. Their second Nicene council, you will recollect, dates very late in the eighth century : It had been preceded by the council of Constantinople ordering the demolition of images; and was followed almost immediately by the council of Frankfort, which not only rejected its decrees, but treated them and its acts with great contempt : for it is agreed that the Caroline books, publish-

See Note [AA]

ed soon after by the command of Charlemagne, speak the sentiments of that council; and no protestant could reprobate more pointedly the stupidity and impiety which dictated so open and gross a violation of the second commandment. [BB] Miserably contemptible however as is the trash contained in those acts of the second council of Nice, and of which the Romanists themselves are ashamed, it has supplied most of the arguments now in vogue. For there we are told of the cherubim with which the ark was adorned; and the brazen serpent which Moses set up. As if either of them was at all set up to be adored? We know indeed that when the latter came to have incense burnt before it, it was destroyed as an abomination. To all this there is an answer given by one of the fathers, a great favourite of theirs, Tertullian, which is so applicable even to all their practices, that I cannot forbear adducing it. He was condemning workmen who made images. These alledged the brazen serpent. His answer is, "thou hast a plain commandment," "make no likeness of any thing." If thou wouldest follow the example of Moses, make no likeness contrary to the commandment, untill God shall bid thee do it." [cc] The church you

See Note [BB]

See Note [cc]

see, in his time, had not yet learned to make void the word of God by traditions or perversions of scripture.

What I have thus alleged to you, long and tedious as it may have appeared, is but a very small part of what has been urged against this gross breach of God's commandment, or of what has presented itself to my mind. But I must not try your patience any longer. I should indeed weary and disgust you, if I were to go into any details respecting many of their abuses, such as what sort of saints and of relics have been and are in many cases the objects of this worship, the gross frauds that have been practised, and the silly and ridiculous fables which have been imposed and passed current as articles of faith. But my endeavour has been to take the question in the way which was most unexceptionable, and indeed most favourable to our adversaries, because I wished to meet and to confute them, as they have often been met and confuted, (though unhappily not convinced) out of their own mouths.

One advantage and a considerable one, I certainly feel that I possess. To the greater part of you nothing of what I have said can seem strange,

for happily the doctrine has more than once in this place been brought to your ears, by much better authority than mine. Nor in following an example which must be so respected by all of us, have I supposed that I could really and substantially add to what has been said. But great and important truths cannot too often be brought to view ; lest as it has in many instances happened, they should be forgotten or perverted. It is for this very purpose that a perpetual ministry of the gospel was instituted ; that even thus, through our means, the doctrines of our God and Saviour should be preserved inviolate. What I have done therefore, you must grant to me, you must permit me to say, has not been done “out of strife or vain glory,” but in discharge of my duty. I have done it too not despising certainly, but not anxiously bent to obtain the praise of men. It is in these days much connected with a liberality which appears to me to deal somewhat too much in concessions, and not unfrequently leads to an undue compromising of the truth. Among its favourite canons it is laid down that we are not to press an adversary with consequences which he disclaims. And in some cases, and to a certain extent it may be a good rule.

But if it be to be carried to the extent of requiring, as some persons seem to do, that we are to give implicit assent to the representations which a man may choose to make of himself, of his acts, or of his doctrines, I can never subscribe to it. This would make it become morally or nearly impossible, not only to detect error, but to convict criminals. We must, I contend, in all cases be allowed to enquire if a story be consistent ; and if certain consequences necessarily follow from certain positions, we must also be allowed to say that they cannot be separated ; that the one must be taken with the other. Nay, fallacies may be so gross, that we cannot avoid asking whether a man deceives himself or means to impose upon us ; whether he be “deceiving” or “deceived,” or both ; for the apostle shews us that not unfrequently both meet in the same persons. Whether any thing of this kind may or may not have happened in the case of those late and well known controversies to which I have alluded, I must leave you to say.

One of the gentlemen in question has been pleased to treat with great contempt and levity the interpretations of the apocalypse commonly

received among protestants.[DD] Now it is certain, first, that the Babylon mentioned in that book is Rome. All are agreed in this. It is equally certain that what St. John is describing is the state of the church, and it is to that also St. Paul refers in his epistles, when he is speaking of the man of sin, and the grand apostacy. It is most certain also that fornication, there as in other parts of scripture, means idolatry. Now untill some better account, equally consistent with these acknowledged positions, can be given of what is there described, we must take leave to maintain our present opinion.

To sum up the whole. The invocation of saints and angels, as practised in the church of Rome, is idolatrous, as being divine or religious worship (take what word you will) paid to creatures. It is not civil worship, such as we pay to one another here on earth. It is such worship as pre-supposes supernatural qualities existing in the objects of devotion. It is further ascertained and fixed to be idolatry, by the use of images, before which, or to which, men bow down and pay adoration. And it is idolatry peculiarly sinful in Christians, as it derogates from the honour of the one mediator.

See Note [DD]

This being the case, I shall not fear to apply to Papal Rome, as I have done once before, in an audience equally respectable, and more numerous than this, that remarkable passage, so harmonizing with my text. "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."*

* Rev. xviii. 4. Bampton Lectures for 1807. p. 315.

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### *Page 17. Note [A]*

For the most ample proof of all this, the reader has only to dip into any one of the tracts which have been published of late on this subject. But a short reference to some of the most marked of these evasions may not be amiss. Mr Lingard having to defend the doctrine of his church respecting the Eucharist, has done it studiously, and almost avowedly abstaining from the mention of transubstantiation, although every one knows that this is the real and proper point in dispute between us; that which is required to be specifically disclaimed in the declaration against popery. Pressed by me with the canons, decretal bulls and offices of his church, he is silent:—He only says that he trusts that “his readers will give him credit for the knowledge of his own belief.” Preface to his tracts p. vi. Again, he declares, and in this is joined by Mr Eustace, that indulgences in his church are nothing but the commutation of the public penance which was required for crimes in the primitive church, and is still in use with us. This to be sure is something *more* than *mere evasion*. The reader cannot have forgot what it was that first called forth the exertions of Luther, and the bull of Leo, by which that great man’s opposition to indulgences, as practised in the Romish church is condemned: and by which they are in

fact declared, (and not only in that very bull, but in the bull of the late pope, (called "*Auctorem Fidei*,")) which standing uncontradicted is infallible doctrine,) to consist in the dealing out the merits of Christ and the saints out of a certain treasure of which the pope has the management. Dr Milner's evasions have been most prominently exhibited in denying that his church maintains that heretics are to be exterminated or persecuted: he can't deny indeed that this has been the practice of Roman catholic countries, nor that it is distinctly enjoined by the 4th Lateran council, which is a general and a famous council of their church: but he says that it is a canon of *discipline* not of *doctrine*! As to the inquisition, he and all the rest say nothing:—He says moreover that with the persecutions of the 12, 13, 14, & 15 centuries we can have nothing to do, because the heretics of those days were not called protestants; and, besides, that this was no act of the church or of the clergy, because the burning or other capital punishment was only a consequence of the decree which pronounced the culprit to be an obstinate or relapsed heretic; and the sentence was executed by laymen and not by clerks: and moreover whenever the obstinate or relapsed heretic was delivered over to the secular arm to be burnt, or otherwise destroyed, the ecclesiastical judges always with great gravity intreated that he should be tenderly used and that no harm should be done to him. This right reverend doctor, and the rest, are indignant at being told that it is a maxim of their church that no faith is to be kept with heretics to the prejudice of the church; but when the decree of the council of Constance to that effect is set before them, they say nothing, but still insist that they can keep their

word in common transactions between man and man as well as any body, which we don't deny. Then they would have it that the reading of the scriptures in the vulgar tongues was not denied to the laity in their church, because in every country, and particularly here, there were such translations of the scriptures to be had ; but when put to the test by Mr Blair and Mr Lefroy, and the gentlemen associated with them, they were fain to acknowledge that it was a doctrine of their church that the reading of the word of God in the vulgar tongue was not to be allowed to every body or without special license. Then to come to what may be "instar omnium," Mr Lingard in the preface to his tracts, of course, giving us his most deliberate opinion, refers us for a correct knowledge of the doctrines of his church, to whom does the reader think ? to "Holden, Analysis Fidis : Veron, regula fidei : Bossuet, exposition de la doctrine de l' Eglise catholique : and *an essay on catholic communion, by a minister of the church of England*" !! Now, Bossuet indeed was a bishop ; but it is well known that his doctrines are not those of the popes ; and archbishop Wake has shewn most pointedly, and very much at large, that it is made up of evasion and equivocation. (see his exposition and other tracts in preserv. against popery, vol. iii.) Holden and Veron are obscure and perfectly unauthorized writers. And the last treatise referred to bears a lie on the face of it, for it is evidently written by a Romanist, in the assumed character of "a minister of the church of England ; whom therefore we may be allowed to designate as a wolf in sheep's clothing. And these are the doctors of their church, who are to supersede their popes, saints and general councils ! and this in a church which posi-

tively says that it is to popes and general councils, and to them alone, that it belongs to declare what is the true doctrine! Mr Lingard however is so fond of this same "Essay on catholic communion," that he has republished it with a preface, in which not one word is said of the assumed character of its author; but occasion is taken to repeat some common place abuse which he had before vented more than once in almost the same terms against his opponents! For fuller particulars see the author's tracts on the Roman catholic question, particularly his reply to Dr Milner and supplement to the reply, his doctrine of the Eucharist and address to the Roman catholics of England. In all which the reader will be so good as to correct a mistake into which the author was betrayed by Mr Lingard's tracts having first come out anonymously, and their having been ascribed to Mr Fletcher, who is there represented as the writer of them. See also correspondence on the formation, &c. of the Roman catholic Bible society, 1813. printed for Seeley. And the declaration and protestation of the Roman catholics of England, 1812. Printed for J. J. Stockdale. Other evasions will be noticed in the course of the notes.

Page 17. Note [B]

See for this Mr Lingard's tracts and prefaces to the tracts which he has republished; Dr Milner's observations on the sequel to the serious examination, or the author's reply. Besides charging us with *bigotry*! intolerance! illiberality and malignity, and slander; nonsense and malice; and the like; we are uniformly represented as "hunters after preferment;" "unprincipled benefice hunters;" as "men who were never

known to lose any thing which could be obtained by swearing;" "who have been accustomed to make religion a matter of calculation, to weigh tithes against subscriptions, and to estimate the orthodoxy of a creed by the amount of its temporal emoluments." Even the guarded Mr Eustace charges the Bishop of Lincoln with a mistatement, "originating in malevolence and propagated by ignorance."—Then comes Mr Peter Gandolphy, in certain "Letters" (anonymously published, but clearly understood to be his) "to the Archbishop of Canterbury and protestant clergy;" who tells us, (p. 13.) among other things as *liberal*, that by our opposition to them, "*our bishops* and we, *it is supposed*, wish to *palliate* some of our own trespasses on what is forbidden by St. Paul in the 19, 20, and 21, verses of his fifth chapter to the Galatians;"—the offences there specified being "*adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, murders, drunkenness, revellings* and such like !!!"—The rest is full of such charges. On the other hand the Romish priest is represented as all perfection;—the very essence of purity and disinterestedness.—"The Catholic Church," says Mr Lingard, (p. 98.) "has not, like the established Church, in this kingdom, rich and easy livings to bestow on her champions; she cannot invite them, after the heat of the contest, to repose in the lap of indolence."—It is and must be admitted indeed, that, out of this kingdom, the Pope has no lack of good and rich preferment to give, and Cardinal's hats to boot: and he may give them to Englishmen. Moreover, Mr Lingard will, it is hoped, recollect how this reasoning of his tells in favor of the *first* confessors of the protestant faith; of those who were afterwards the ob-

jects of the famous revocation of the edict of Nantes ; of the Vaudois ; and of all those who are *now* protestants in popish countries ; *wherever* such a description of men are tolerated, and allowed, if any such are allowed, to speak with the same freedom as these gentlemen enjoy in this country.

Page 18. Note [c]

Thus Mr Peter Gandolphy in his letters (p. 3) says: " It will be said that I am warmed" (he had just before been abusing the Clergy for writing anonymously, he himself doing at that moment the very same thing !) " and I avow it. For truly, I conceive to be stigmatised a murderer,—a traitor—a seditionist,—a violater of public faith,—merely because I hold communion with the venerable Bishop of Rome, is enough to warm any man whose blood is not as cold as the grave." The Reader may stare and ask where it is that we charge Mr Gandolphy or any Romanist with all this? but this is a trick of theirs, to represent us in the most invidious light by either overcharging what we say, or imputing to us what we never have said. We state the doctrines and the facts and the natural and necessary consequences ; but apply them not to individuals, except where we shew them to have actually followed with respect to the individual. The Homily which is set forth on the subject of this discourse is entitled " of the *danger* of idolatry." The declaration against Popery which is so much cried out against, is, that a man believes, " that in the Sacrament of the Lord's supper there is not any transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever, and that the

invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other Saint, and the sacrifice of the mass, as they are now used in the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous." (30. C. 2. st. 2. c. 1.) Now there is no one that will deny that at Rome itself, there, where the Pope resides, and from whence all authority in their church emanates, this superstition and idolatry *is practised*, that it is in constant *use*. So that even if they could shew that *here* their practice is different, which we are yet to learn, for certainly none of their Bishops have told us any such thing, still that would not prove the declaration to be false in fact, or superfluous. In the author's preface to his tracts, he has, following Stillingfleet, expressly disclaimed any personal application, nay has allowed that men may be and often are, he believes that most of the English Roman catholics are, better than their principles; only if the principles are maintained, it must be still our duty to resist them and guard ourselves against their operation. See tracts on the Roman Catholic Question. p. xv.

*Page 20. Note [D]*

I find this expressly assigned in two recantation Sermons now before me, one preached by Anthony Egane late a Franciscan, and confessor general of the kingdom of Ireland, 1673.—The other by Francis De la Motte, late preacher of the order of the Carmelites 1675.

*Page 21. Note [E]*

Among the latest Popish miracles are those which are said to have taken place at Rome in the year 1796—7 : when at Rome only in the public Churches or Chapels twenty five,

and in other places many more pictures of the Virgin Mary were said and *sworn* to have moved the eyeballs and opened the eyelids in a miraculous manner. The account of this was published here by subscription in 1801 by Keating and Co.—translated by a Mr Rayment. The supposed end of this miracle or miracles may be collected from the decree of approbation (p. 156.) which permits the account to be published “for the greater glory of God and to *augment the devotion of the faithful* towards our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ crucified *and his most holy Mother* the Virgin Mary.” The preliminary discourse by the Rev. John Marchetti is more explicit. He says (p. xli.) “at all events let us give ourselves without reserve into the hands of divine providence, *let us place ourselves under the protection of the B. V. Mary, and we shall have nothing to fear*, for barring sin, there, is no real evil on earth.” In a supplement by some person here in England, there is further this expostulation with those who should doubt of these miracles, “and was it unworthy the wisdom of God to give the preference *in operating his miracles to the signs of the Catholic worship* which impiety had proscribed as *ridiculous subjects of popular superstition*, and which of late years have been the objects of gallic fury and religious Fanaticism? was it unworthy of God to justify the faith and piety of the people, by *shewing them in these stupendous prodigies his marked approbation of their devotion to these sacred effigies, which bring the objects represented, as it were, present to their eyes, and attentive to their petitions?*” Now if this be not the very way and the very sense in which the Pagans worshipped their images, I must confess that I have been all along in an error. This is the very “*præsens*

numen," or "præsens Deus." A little before we are informed that "the prayer most in use during the course of the miracles was the *"Salve Regina"*; the history of which he gives us, and also the following translation "for the benefit of those who understand not the original." And being thus brought forward expressly for the information and edification of the unlearned, and indeed every way applicable to our subject, I subjoin it. [p. lvii.]

"We salute thee O *queen of Heaven, O mother of mercies! our life, our consolation, and our hope.* To thee, we, the exiled children of Eve, raise our voice. *To thee, weeping and groaning, we send up our sighs* in this valley of tears. *Turn then, O most gracious advocate,* thy EYES OF MERCY *towards us,* and shew us, after this our exile, the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O *merciful, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary!*

V. Pray for us O holy mother of God!

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ."

Among the tributaries to this work are most, if not all of the Romish prelates of England and Ireland. Dr Milner, among the rest, subscribes for twelve copies.

As to another supposed miracle which has made some noise in this country, the cure of Winifred White, at St. Winifred's Well, or Holywell, in Flintshire;—one should think that the feats of Ann Moore, the fasting woman of Tutbury, have exhibited such proofs of the possibility of deceiving, even those who were most anxious not to be deceived, that no man can be at a loss to comprehend, how a woman, having put on the appearance of very grievous ailments, whether of her own head or in collusion with a priest,

may return to sound health upon the doing of any indifferent act which she or her confederates may fix upon. But here also the effect intended was evidently the establishing the sanctity of this real or imaginary saint.

*Page 21. Note [F]*

See Mede's apostacy of the latter times, in his works. Now whatever may be thought of his interpretation of *δαμονιων*, his construction of *εν υποκρισει ψευδολογων* is clearly right. It is adopted by Poole in the synopsis, and by Rosenmuller in loco: as well as by Schleusner, in his *Lexicon ad v. ψευδολογος*. nay, it is the interpretation of St. Austin. Lib. xx. contra Faust. c. 18. "intendentes doctrinis dæmoniorum in hypocrisi mendaciloquorum." oper. Ed. Bened. vol. viii. p. 245. And therefore it is not to be disposed of by merely saying as Mr Lingard does, in his easy and confident way, (p. 202 n.) that "this meaning" [he should have said this construction] "is forced, unnatural and unnecessary." Mede's works p. 632.

*Page 22. Note [G]*

I find this particularly brought forward in two among the latest of their publications. One by Messrs. Berrington and Kirk, entitled "the faith of Catholics confirmed by Scripture, and attested by the Fathers," (Introduct. p. xliii.) These are authors of some note. Mr Berrington at least, very much so. The other seems to be more of a Bookseller's job. It is called "Wanderings of the human intellect," &c. by a Mr Bell: who appears to have borrowed much from the other. see p. 397.

## Page 23. Note [H]

See the author's doctrine of the Eucharist, in which the whole dispute between us and the Romanists is fully gone into. Mr Lingard's great argument is, that if they are under a mistake in supposing Christ to be in the bread they commit no idolatry, because they only mean to worship Christ. Now unfortunately there is an instance rather too much in point in the case of the Manichees, (Aug. contr. Faust. lib. xx. c. i.) They believed that Christ had his residence partly in the Sun, partly in the Moon, ("in sole virtutem, in luna sapientiam." c. 6.). Now it is very pertinently asked by Stillingfleet ( treatise on idolatry p. 118) "consider two persons equally persuaded that the Sun is now the tabernacle of Christ, and that he is really present there and disperses all the comfortable influences of heat and light to the world, he being so often in Scripture called the *true light*, and another that he is really present *by transubstantiation* in the *Sacrament*, I would fain understand why the one should not be as free from idolatry as the other?" nay, as he shews afterwards all idolaters might thus be excused "if an involuntary mistake, and firm belief that they worship the true God doth excuse from it." Indeed it is fully admitted by some of their first writers, by Fisher bishop of Rochester among the rest, (contr: œcolamp ad lib. 1. op. p. 760.) that if their doctrine of transubstantiation be not true they are all idolaters. (See Stillingfleet on idolatry p. 116.) (and preservative against Popery vol. iii. p. 278.) I shall close this, by way of proving what I have said of the plain departure which *here* is allowed for the purpose of blinding us, with an extract from a tract called "a Papist misrepresented and represented," first published by Gother in

1683 and most satisfactorily answered by Stillingfleet and others (see vol. iii. of preservative against popery) and put forth again in a shorter, and probably corrected, form by their late Bishop Chaloner. It is recommended also by Mr Lingard, and certainly if Mr Lingard really thinks as he has said [tracts p. 126.] that in the Eucharist all is spiritual, we must not wonder at it. But the wonder is how men who so write can remain Papists. "He," it is said, that is, the papist *truly represented*, believes that Christ "made his words good pronounced at his last supper, *really giving his body and blood to his apostles : the SUBSTANCE of bread and wine REMAINING* as before. The same he believes of the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist &c." Now, I ask, where then is there any transubstantiation ? will Mr Lingard or any other Romanist say that this is the Pope's doctrine, or that this is what Dr Milner, or any vicar apostolical holds ? it is well known that it is not. On referring to Messrs Berrington and Kirk's book the reader will see much of this cautious wording. He will see also fathers cited who are cited in the doctrine of the Eucharist, and he will wonder how they came there, or how they prove transubstantiation. But he will not see many other passages which I have cited, *positively* and *distinctly negativing* transubstantiation.

Page 24. Note [i]

See the author's reply to Dr Milner, p. 200 ; and more at large the vth. and vith. sermons of the Bampton Lectures for 1807.

Page 25. Note [k]

As to the manner how this grew up, see Archp. Usher's answer to the challenge of a Jesuit, p. 424. 442. &c : Dr

Freeman's treatise concerning the invocation of Saints : preserv. ag. Popery vol. ii. p. 161 : Beausobre Histoire de Manichee Liv. ix. c. iv. See also Mede on the grand apostacy p. 641 ; who cites a curious passage from Eusebius, præpar : Evangel : lib. 13. c. ii. where the father after quoting Plato's opinion, that the souls of those who fell in battle should be honoured as dæmons, and their sepulchres adored, adds that " these things do well befit at or after the decease of the favourites of God, who may well be called the champions of the true Religion : whence it is our custom to go to their tombs, and make our prayers at them, and to honour their blessed souls."

See also Tenison on idolatry.—and Vossius *de idololatria* : a folio with such contents as it is rather alarming to encounter ; but these last chiefly for the growth of it among the Heathen.

Page 26. Note [L]

For this see Bellarmine *de Beatitudine Sanctorum*. lib. i. c. 12.

Page 27. Note [M]

The opposition or distinction in the Nicene council (act. vii. p. 686. Binnii Concil) is between λατρεία and τιμητική προσκυνήσις ; though this is not well defined ; but it expressly allows all the acts of adoration to be performed before the images, which are used in the worship of God. Indeed προσκυνήσις seems to mean the *outward* act of worship, naturally applicable to all : and so this would be no distinction. But what says Athanasius, Orat: iii: contr. Arianos? (p. 394.

Paris. ed. 1627.) κτισμα κτισματι ου ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΕΙ, αλλα δουλος διαπολην, και κτισμα τον Θεον. Creature does not *worship* a creature, but the servant the master, and the creature God." And he goes on to alledge the examples of Peter, when Cornelius would have worshipped him ; and of the angel that stopped John. He then adds " Ουκουν Θεου εστι μονου ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΕΙΣΘΑΙ, και τουτο ισασι και αυτοι οι Αγγελιοι. κ. τ. λ." " Is it not to God alone that it belongs to be worshipped ? And this the angels themselves well know, &c." It should be observed that he was arguing against the Arians, who made a distinction between God and Christ ; and so worshipped the latter with an inferior sort of worship ; or at least as an inferior God. But the Father could not have argued thus, if he had allowed of inferior worship, or worship to inferior beings. If it be said that the distinction is in *τιμητικη* ; between *honour* and *worship*, this also will not hold ; for honour in that sense, when coupled with the act of adoration, belongs to God as exclusively, and he is as jealous of it as of worship. So also Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. xl.) arguing against the Arians, says " if I worshipped any creature," " ει εις κτισματι προσκυνον," or was baptized in the name of any creature, I should lose what is divine in me, and be no more regenerate : " and then, he adds, " how could he reprove those who worshipped (" προσκυνονηλας," always the same word) Astarte or Chamos or the stars, when he himself did not worship the two in whom he was baptized (that is, the Son, and the Holy Ghost) or *worshipped* those who were his fellow-servants ? " η ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΩΝ τα ἰμοδουλα ; " But let it be recollected, as in the text is mentioned, that, whatever distinction there may be about the image and the prototype, there is none laid down

as to the prototypes, whether of Christ or the saints. St. Ambrose has a passage which seems particularly calculated to meet the distinction between "*Latreia*" and "*duleia*:" it is in his commentary on the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans; speaking of the heathen whom St. Paul there reprobates, he says, "*non negant deum, sed serviunt creaturæ: quo non excusantur, sed accusantur; quia cognoscentes Deum "qui et benedictus in sæcula."* Hanc benedictionem alio in loco filio Dei assignat." Where he collects an argument for the divinity of Christ; and so this offence may be committed against him. But the reader will observe what he says, that "*they did not deny God, but served the creature:*" They gave to the creature only the honour of *Duleia*:—Yet this did *not* excuse them." Ambro. Oper. Tom. 1. p. 245. 6.

Page 27. Note [N]

The words of the Trent catechism, are as follows: first, as to the invocation of the saints: (Part: iii. § 24) "*Etsi ob eam causam etiam magis colendi et invocandi sunt, quod pro salute hominum preces assidue faciunt, multaque eorum merito et gratia in nos Deus confert beneficia.*" Here are the *merits* and *grace* of the saints, without even the interposition of Christ. And it should be remembered that this catechism is an instruction to parish priests (*ad parochos*) how they should explain the articles of faith to the ignorant and uninformed. As to images, after much of what we see repeated in other books, it says (§ 40) "*Tum rudes, et qui imaginum ipsarum institutum ignorant, docebit (scilicet: parochus) imagines factas ad utriusque testamenti cognoscendam historiam atque ejus memoriam identidem renovandam; qua rerum*

divinarum memoria excitati, ad *colendum* atque amandum ipsum *Deum* vehementius inflammemur; *Sanctorum* quoque imagines in templis demonstrabit, ut *et colantur, et exemplo moniti*, ad eorum vitam ac mores nos conformemus."

The title to the 39th section is "*usus imaginum Christi; et sanctorum* approbatur." All that has been said of the word *προσκύνην*, and of the want of distinction between the worship to be paid to Christ or his saints, or to the images of the one or the other, applies equally here. The saint sets out (for Pius the V. it should be remembered was canonized), with clearing the way to this division of his work, "*De cultu et invocatione sanctorum*;"—"Quis enim adeo demens est, qui, edicante rege, ne se pro rege quisquam gerat, aut regio cultu atque honore affici patiatur, continuo putet nolle regem suis ut magistratibus honos deferatur." Certainly the honour that is *due* to magistrates may be paid to them, without derogating from the honour due to the king. But now suppose a king had decreed that none should bend the knee before, or kiss the hand of, any other but him; and had further decreed that he would watch and punish every offence against this law of his with a particular jealousy; what should we think of a set of men who should insist, that it was quite lawful, and no infringement of this decree to bend the knee before certain magistrates, or to kiss their hands?

*Page 28, Note [o]*

The bishops and priests &c. are to teach, "*Sanctos una cum Christo regnantes, orationes suas pro hominibus afferre; bonum atque utile esse suppliciter eos invocare, et ob beneficia impetranda a Deo per filium ejus Jesum Christum do-*

minum nostrum qui solus noster redemptor et salvator est, ad eorum orationes, *opem auxiliumque* confugere: *illos vero* qui negant sanctos æterna felicitate in cælo fruantes invocandos esse; aut qui asseverant vel illos pro hominibus non orare, vel eorum, ut pro nobis, etiam singulis, orent invocationem esse idololatriam; vel pugnare cum verbo Dei, adversarique honori unius mediatoris Dei et hominum Jesu Christi; vel stultum esse, in cælo regnantibus *voce* vel *mente supplicare, impie sentire.*" It is *impiety*, it seems, to deny that it is proper to put up *supplications*, even *mental*, to saints. It is I suppose in pursuance of this, that in the Dublin prayer book, set forth by archbishop Troy, amongst the questions which the penitent is to put to himself, for examination on the several heads of the commandments, he is bidden (under the third, or what they call the second commandment, that which relates to the taking of the name of God in vain) to ask himself whether he have "blasphemed God or his saints?" The poor man's manual of devotions, &c. printed for R. Cross, No. 28, Bridge Street, Dublin, 1805. And note that in the questions on the *first* commandment there is not one word said about idolatry, or improper worshipping of any creature or image. What wonder, since in the ten commandments set forth in p. 17, all that is set down as the *first* commandment, (which *should* comprehend our *second*,) is,

"I. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have none other Gods but me."—Then comes,

"II. Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain."

The IX. is, Thou shalt not *desire* thy neighbour's *wife*.

The X. Thou shalt not *desire* thy neighbour's *goods*.

Perhaps it may not be amiss to give the full title of this book, as it will shew what is the direction given to the devotions of the ignorant in Dublin.

“ The poor man’s manual of devotions ; or devout christian’s daily companion. Containing morning and evening prayer ; devotions for sundays and holy days ; the thirty days prayer ; prayers at mass ; prayers before and after confession and communion ; the seven penitential psalms ; the *psalter*, *rosary*, and *litanies* of JESUS ; the *rosary* and *litanies* of the *blessed Virgin* ; prayers of St. Bridget ; prayers and litanies for the sick ; prayers and litanies for the dead. With several other approved devotions. To which are added, the vespers in Latin and English. PERMISSU SUPERIORUM.”

Usher cites a still bolder flight of Hieronymus Zanetinus, who states an offender against the first commandment to be one

“ *Qui colit extra deum VEL SANCTOS quodque creatum.*”

now certain it is that this book never was condemned as heretical. It is therefore as much their doctrine as Veron’s, or Holden’s, or even Bossuets. *Usher’s answer to a challenge*, p. 474.

Page 30. Note [P]

“ Laus Deo, virginique matri Mariæ” at the end of each of the four books “ de controversiis.” see opera : Colon. edit. 1619. tom. ii. Where Christ is wholly omitted. There is the same omission made by Baronius at the end of his annals: (Tom : ix. 894.) “ Deo favente, opitulanteque suis precibus Dei genetrice Maria.” Though perhaps Christ is meant to be

included in the word "God;"—as it will be seen that by some the Virgin is called the "temple of the trinity:" which must be meant with a reference to her having been the mother of Christ, and so the mother of God, &c. &c. !!—and indeed, without referring, (as it was once intended) the reader to Jewell, and to Usher, (answer to the challenge of a jesuit. p. 477. 8,) and to the preservative against popery (vol. ii. & iii. under their proper heads,) it will be better to set down, and shew how the virgin is worshipped, and by authority of their bishops, in that island, which is more purely popish, (as far as she is popish) than any part of Europe, excepting only the countries subjected to the inquisition; the isle of *saints*, as Ireland has been, and is by some of them, still called, and perhaps the reader will think not without some reason. In that prayer book, or *poor man's* manual of devotions, which has before been cited as set forth by Dr Troy, we have first (at p. 24.) "a testament of the soul, to be made by every good christian every day:" in imitation perhaps of Cardinal Bona's famous "testamentum," and in this as in that we have a commendation of the soul. The Roman catholic of Ireland is directed to say *daily*, "I commend my soul, and all that I am, to the intercession of the glorious Virgin Mary, *my good mother* and *advocate*, to St. Joseph, to my angel guardian, and to all the angels and saints of heaven, whom I most humbly beseech to assist me at the hour of my death."

"For *my last words*, I say in profound humility and contrition, JESUS, MARIA, *desiring to die in their blessed arms*; when my tongue cannot pronounce those *holy names*, I desire to do it with my heart.

“If my heart should fail me with my judgment, *I say them now for then, with all affection and POSSIBLE submission, JESUS, MARIA.*

“Nos cum prole pia, benedicat Virgo Maria.

“Virgin Mother, I humbly crave  
Thy blessing, and thy Son’s to have.”

Every one indeed knows the common use made in all Roman catholic countries of this exclamation “Jesus Maria!”

Next comes (at page 55) The litany of our Lady of Loretto. It begins,

“We fly to thy patronage O holy mother of God, despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin.”

Then, after the usual invocations of God and Christ, we come to the virgin ; she is invoked as “*holy Mary, holy mother of God, holy virgin of virgins, mother of Christ, mother of divine grace, mother most pure, mother most chaste, mother undefiled, mother inviolate, mother most amiable, mother most admirable, mother of our creator, mother of our Redeemer, virgin most prudent, virgin most venerable, virgin most renowned, virgin most powerful, virgin most merciful, virgin most faithful, mirror of justice, seat of wisdom, cause of our joy, spiritual vessel, vessel of honour, vessel of singular devotion, mystical rose, tower of David, tower of ivory, house of gold, ark of the covenant, gate of heaven, morning star, health of the weak, refuge of sinners, comforter of the afflicted, help of christians, queen of angels, &c. &c.*” “Pray for us,” indeed goes along with all this ; but can most of these attributes be ascribed to any but a divine being ? Is there not blasphemy in this, as well as idolatry ?

We have then, after certain prayers and acts, which, whoever devoutly says, has certain indulgences granted him; (p. 36.) other prayers which “all those who devoutly say, *in honour of the passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in honour of his blessed mother, the Virgin Mary,* and continue the said devotion for several days, may hope mercifully to obtain their lawful requests, as *hath been often experienced, &c.*” Then at p. 65 comes the prayer alluded to before, ushered in with these words, “The following prayer hath many remarkable properties, as to obtain a good death to any Person that devoutly says it once a day, with a good intention to the glory of God, and *devotion to our blessed Virgin.* And *saying it devoutly for any woman in labour, it forwards with God’s blessing, a speedy and safe delivery, with many other benefits !!!*”

### *The Prayer.*

“O Jesus Christ, son of the divine bounty of God, be my aid;” (Christ is here very soon disposed of; not so the Virgin :) “O blessed Virgin, listen unto me, mother of the saviour of the world assist me, mother of God, *lady of heaven, sweetly beloved queen, and advocate of all human lineage,* pray come, amiable and mild lady, lady of angels, flower of the patriarchs, desire of the prophets, treasure of the apostles, mother of the confessors, ornament of virgins, O sweet virgin Mary, pray for me, lady, who art heard above the company of angels, *preserve me from all evils, past, present, and to come, do not abandon me this day, nor at that dreadful hour when that my soul shall be separated from my body:* Obtain for me, sweet Virgin, in the hour of my death and judg-

ment, that my soul may come to the heavenly paradise before your son Jesus, and that I may be worthy to see his grace and everlasting glory with you. *O gate of paradise, palace of Jesus Christ, star of the sea, consolation of mankind, beginning without end, take pity of me, O sweet and blessed virgin Mary, daughter of God the Father, mother of Jesus Christ and spouse of the Holy Ghost, gate of Heaven, door of the firmament, hope of christians, fountain of piety, safe-guard of peace, glory of virgins, honoured above all angels, mother of mercy, miracle of virginity, virgin above all virgins, temple of the most holy trinity, beautiful above all creatures, O lady of meekness, abyss of mildness, comfort of the sorrowful, consolation of the afflicted, in you the angels do rejoice. O sweet lady of mercy, turn your merciful eyes unto me, enlighten me with grace, and hear my prayers ; unto the protection of almighty God, and your holy hands, O refuge of sinners, I recommend my soul and body. Amen."*

" Here say a *patier noster* and *Ave Maria*, and pray for F. W."

Who this F. W. may be, and whether this be a secret to be revealed only by the confessor, or to be purchased ; as most probably this indulgence or privilege to the prayer was purchased by F. W., the reader must be left to conjecture ; but as to the blasphemy and idolatry of this prayer there can be no doubt. Any person who wishes to see more of this may turn to the rosary of the blessed Virgin at p. 235. But surely this is enough. When Jewell pressed Harding with some of St. Barnard's flights in the same style, Harding said that he only did " in excess of mind spiritually sport and dally (as it were) with her, that it was not impiously or impudently spoken : but rather impious and impudent to find

fault with it." Jewell's defence p. 294 : and perhaps Dr Troy may say the same. But such is the prayer ; and such of course is the doctrine, on which the prayer must be founded : prayer and doctrine, be it always remembered, *now* in use and approved.

Page 32. Note [q]

This may be seen in any breviary : under the head " *commendatio animæ*". But as for the reasons alledged it is best to alledge *modern* authorities ; we refer the reader specially to the Rev. Peter Gandolphy's liturgy printed by Keating and Co. 1812 : where the reader will find it at p. 239. This gentleman who, (either through ignorance, or because he is silly and vulgar enough to see a good joke in it) calls the bishop of Durham, Dr Shute, has it seems *edited*, as he calls it, this " book of common prayer," with a view of making Protestants acquainted with the ritual of the Church of Rome, and so winning them back to that fold. He has therefore given us all their litanies (and among the rest the litany of our Lady of Loretto ;) the form of baptism, with all its mummeries of exorcisms, and adjurations, and applications of stole, salt, spittle, and chrism : and other such choice fancies. He cites as some others do, the absolution of our Church, (only permitted, not enjoined to be used, and in fact never used) in the office of the visitation of the sick, as being somewhat similar to theirs. But he says nothing as to the form in their office of communion of the sick, which concludes "*in virtue of that power committed to me by the apostolic see, I grant thee a plenary INDULGENCE of all thy sins*, in the name of the Father, + and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." p. 247. His argument for the lawfulness of the invocation of

saints runs thus, "in short, why should not christians be permitted to do what angels and saints have done in the new Testament (Luke i. 28. 42.;) or to use that style of address, which was common to Daniel, David, and the *other saints of the old law*? "O ye angels of the Lord bless the Lord: praise and exalt him &c." That is, because the angel Gabriel said to Mary, *when on earth*, that she was highly favoured, and that the Lord was with her and that she was blessed among women; and Elizabeth also called her the mother of her Lord, therefore, it is lawful to call upon her *in Heaven*, and address her with all sorts of blasphemous titles, and ask of her all such blessings as only God can bestow!!! and because David and other saints bade angels "praise God," we are to praise the angels, and to call on them to be our intercessors and guardians and protectors!!! Most choice reasoning truly! However as we are here told of *the saints under the old law*, it might as well be remembered that none of them were ever invoked by the Jews:—that amidst all their idolatry they kept clear of that—and he must not alledge their being in the *limbus patrum*: for certainly the Jews, the orthodox Jews at least, believed their patriarchs and prophets to be in Heaven.

Page 32. Note [R]

See "missale romanum: Dublinii, typis Wogan, 1804: with the formal approbation of Archbishop Troy. at p. 202." *Suscipe sancta trinitas, hanc oblationem, quam tibi offerimus, ob memoriam passionis, resurrectionis et ascensionis Jesu Christi, Domini nostri, et in honorem beatæ Mariæ semper virginis, et beati Joannis baptistæ, et sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et istorum, et omnium sanctorum; ut illis profi-*

*ciat ad honorem, nobis autem ad salutem: et illi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cælis, quorum, memoriam agimus in terris. Per eundem christum dominum nostrum. Amen."*

The explanation of this by Pius Vth. in the Trent catechism, is as follows. "*Etsi ecclesia interdum missas in memoriam et honorem sanctorum celebrare consuevit: non tamen illis sacrificium, sed uni Deo, qui sanctos immortalis gloria coronavit, offerri dicit. Quare nec sacerdos unquam dicere solet, offero tibi sacrificium Petre vel Paule; sed dum uni soli Deo immolat, gratias illi agit pro beatissimorum martyrum insigni victoria: eorumque patrocinium ita implorat ut pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cælis, quorum memoriam facimus in terris. Hæc, autem, quæ de hujus sacrificii veritate a Catholica ecclesia tradita sunt, ex Domini verbis accepit: cum extrema illa nocte hæc ipsa sacra mysteria apostolis commendans; hoc facite, inquit, in meam commemorationem."* Pars. ii. da. § 80. And so because our Lord said, "do this in remembrance of me;" it is to be done in remembrance of all those whom the Popes shall choose to make into saints!!

Mr Eustace however is so full of all this that he quarrels with the inscription on the Church of St. Peter's at Rome as "being below the dignity and destination" (what does he mean?) "of such a temple, erected by the common Father of all Christians [*Bona verba!* are we poor protestants included? surely not] *in their name, and at their expence.*" So, instead, of "In honorem principis apostolorum Paulus Borghesius Romanus;" he would read, "*Deo optimo maximo*" [the Pagan style happily selected] "*in honorem principis apostolorum Ecclesia Catholica:*" "an inscription," he says "more worthy of a temple which may be justly considered

as the common property of the Christian World ;" that is, of the Roman Catholics ; who choose to call themselves the whole Christian World, and would by these sort of devices, and the continual appropriation to themselves of the appellation of " Catholics," draw us on to believe, or allow them to assume that to be the fact. For in other publications " Catholics" and " Christians" are stated to be synonymous terms. Why indeed should not the inscription be wholly Pagan ? " Deo *optimo maximo et genio loci.*" This would be still more classical. See Tenison on idolatry. p. 81.

Page 34. Note [s]

See Jewell Defence of apologie p. 296. where he cites Austin, shewing that the same argument had been used by heretics in his days, and answered by the father just as we answer it now. " Paulus non facit se mediatorem inter populum et deum : sed rogat ut *pro se orent invicem omnia membra corporis Christi.*" Contr. epist : Parmeniani lib. 2. c. 8. The whole chapter is in point. Austin urges as we have said in the text that " all the members must care for each other, and if one member suffer," &c. &c. and then goes on " ac sic oratio *pro invicem membrorum adhuc in terra laborantium ascendat ad caput quod præcessit in cælum,* in quo est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris." Aug : opera. ed : Bened. tom. ix. p. 23. The reader will observe how completely this negatives all idea of saints in Heaven praying : it is the prayers of the members " yet labouring on earth : " and always " mutually " " ad invicem." Observe too that the only head mentioned or thought of, is the head which is gone before into Heaven ; not either Christ on earth in the wafer ; or his vicar in the vatican.

## Page 35. Note [T]

Any reader who wishes to see what has been written on the *limbus patrum*, may find ample information in Usher's answer to the challenge of a Jesuit: p. 276.

## Page 36. Note [U]

See as to this also Jewell. loc. citat. p. 294. "Ye say there is only one mediator of salvation; but there are many mediators of intercession. And thus with this pretty simple distinction, ye convey yourselves away invisibly in a cloud." He then asks what is meant by their calling on the Virgin to save all those that glorify her? "salva omnes qui te glorificant?" To this Harding replies that by "save us" they mean, "pray to God that we may be saved." After pressing them with many of their blasphemies, particularly "the Virgin being to command her son," the Bishop goes on "howbeit perhaps you will turn likewise *commandment* into *prayer*: and thus as you list, *salvation* is *prayer*, *merit* is *prayer*, and *commandment* is *prayer*." "Wherefore say ye thus of *Thomas a Becket*, of whose sainthood for ought that I know, ye may well stand in doubt; "Tu per Thomæ sanguinem, quem pro te impendit, fac nos Christe scandere, quo Thomas ascendit." "O Christ, make us to ascend unto Heaven, whither Thomas is ascended, even by the blood of Thomas, which was shed for thy sake." Here you see not only *intercession*, but "*salvation* in the *blood* of Thomas." Harding does not deny that this is one of their hymns, but says "This is an objection for a Cobler, as the other was, and not for a Divine, whose duty, it were to depend of things not of words &c. and that because they know it was a most gracious gift of

God, that he gave *St. Thomas* grace to die for his honour, when they desire to be holpen by his *blood*, representing the memory of *St. Thomas* unto Christ" &c. This is all that he has to say in extenuation of this rather singular piece of blasphemy. Jewell then goes on to cite Austin (ubi supr.) who after citing the words of John, "if we sin we have an advocate with the father, &c;" goes on, "if now," he had said, "do not sin, but if ye sin, you have *me a mediator* with the Father, and I (exoro) *intreat him* for your sins (as Parmenianus in one place set *the bishop as mediator* between *the people* and *God*;) what good and faithful christian could bear him? who would *look upon him as an apostle*, and *not an antichrist*?" "si vero ita diceret, hæc scripsi vobis, ne peccetis; et si quis peccaverit, mediatorem me habetis ad patrem, et ego exoro pro peccatis vestris (sicut Parmenianus quodam loco mediatorem posuit episcopum inter populum et Deum; quis eum ferret bonorum atque fidelium christianorum? quis sicut apostolum Christi, et non sicut antichristum intueretur?" again, immediately after the passage cited in the preceding note, the father says, "for if Paul was a mediator, so would all his other fellow apostles be: as if there were many mediators: nor could Paul have had any reason for what he had said, there is *one God* and *one mediator* between God and man, *the man Jesus Christ*." Nam si esset mediator Paulus, essent, utique et cæteri coapostoli ejus, ac si multi mediatores essent nec ipsi Paulo constaret ratio qua dixerat, unus enim Deus, unus et mediator Dei et hominum homo Christus Jesus." I have cited these passages because they do away so completely every idea that Austin conceived that the apostles were in any way "intercessors" in the proper sense of the

words: nay, he supposes that John would have been no better than *Antichrist*, if he had said that *he would intreat* or pray for the people: thus clearly condemning as it were beforehand this very offence against Christ of which the church of Rome is guilty. It is evidently impossible that St Austin could have argued thus, if he or any of his contemporaries, had thought it lawful to pray to the apostles to pray for them. There could not with him be any mediators of intercession, or mediators to intreat.

Page 38. Note [v]

See what was said before of the bull "*auctorem fidei*," confirming and referring to the bull of Leo X. against Luther, in which the positions of Scipio Ricci, as of Luther before him, are declared injurious to the *merits* of *Christ* and the *saints*. See also Bampton Lectures for 1807. Sermon v. for examples of the way in which they plead the merits of the saints in their prayers and hymns:—and innumerable others might be added.

Page 43. Note [x]

See Tenison on idolatry. Stillingfleet on idolatry and defence. See also Usher's answer to a challenge, p. 458. and the authorities cited there. See also Origen against Celsus; where Celsus labours hard to shew that his demons, or inferiour Gods are on the same footing as the angels. lib. v. § 4. lib. viii. § 53. 54. See also § 2. where he attributes the refusal of the christians to worship demons to pride:—and afterwards says that since they worship the Son with God, they should also worship God's ministers. § 13. Most evident must it be from all this, that the worship of saints was never in those days thought of, or he would not have spared to urge the christians with that. See also Austin de

civitate dei *passim* : particularly lib. x. and lib. viii. c. 14 and c. 18. where he speaks of the platonic idea of mediation of demons, and of three orders of beings, gods and men and demons.

Page 44. Note [v]

See for this Stopford's pagano papismus. London 1675. p. 31. &c. We have, as it is well known, St George for England, St Denis for France, St Patrick and others for Ireland, St Mark for Venice, &c. &c. Then St Nicholas for seamen : the three kings for travellers, St Gregory for scholars, St Cosma and Damian for physicians, St Julian for pilgrims ; and poor Mary Magdalen for women of ill fame !! &c. Then St Rock and St Sebastian for those who have the plague ; St Anthony for the eresypelas ; St Venisa for the green sickness ; and St Hubert for the bite of mad dogs, &c. &c. St Apollonia for the tooth ache, should however be mentioned. To her there was "in the *Horæ B. Virg. sec. us. sarum* the following Antiphona.

"*Virgo Christi egregia pro nobis Apollonia funde preces ad dominum, ut tollat omne noxium, ne pro reatu criminum morbo vexemur dentium.*

"And in the *Horæ B. Virg : sec. us. Romæ* this prayer.

"Almighty, everlasting God who didst deliver *St Apollonia* thy virgin and martyr, from the hands of her enemies, and didst hear her prayer ; I entreat thee by her intercession and the intercession of *St Laurence* thy martyr, together with that of all the he and she saints" (*sanctorum et sanctarum* I suppose,) "to expel pain from my teeth, and to make me safe and sound, that I may return thee my eternal thanksgiving, &c." *Ibm.* p. 34.

Page 44. Note [z]

It may be as well to point out one or two abominations as to relics. God says expressly, "thou shalt fear God and"

swear by his name." But the name of God was supposed (and is yet supposed by many) not to be sufficiently binding, unless men were sworn on the relics of the saints. This was, it seems, to impart superiour sanctity and obligation to the oath. Then, it is a constant practice, whenever a church or chapel is consecrated, to procure the relics of some saint to be placed under the altar: and in the office of the mass there is a regular reference to them. (see Missal. Dublin. p. 158.) This, seems to be considered as so necessary to the holiness of the place, that, among the canons of the II<sup>d</sup> council of Nice is one (Can: 7) ordering that in such churches as have been consecrated without any relics, the defect shall be supplied by the deposition of relics (*καταθεσιν λειψάνων*), with the accustomed prayers: and the omission is called an impiety; (*απεισφημια*) and it is further declared that "any Bishop who in future should consecrate a church without this deposit of relics, should be deposed." What a temptation, nay, almost necessity was here created to forge such articles! We presume that this canon, followed as it has been by continual practice, will not be one of those which Mr Lingard deems of no authority. He says (p. 238, after calling the acts of the council "a gross meal") that "they are of no authority in the church. We *assent* indeed to the doctrinal decree passed in the last session, which was approved by the popes: but in the *acts* and *canons*, much is contained to which the Roman church would never impart its sanction, *quæ apud nos nec habentur, nec admittuntur*, says Anastasius Bibliothecarius, a writer of the same age." Now really this is curious. The Romish church receives the synod as a *general* synod: the *seventh*:—it is numbered among the general councils. And

where is the pope, or council, that has made any exception as to any of its canons or acts? But it seems we have Anastasius the librarian as an authority; and he is characterized as a contemporary, as one "of the same age," to give him a credit which otherwise he would not have. Now it so happens that Anastasius, besides being an *unauthorized individual*, lived in the century following. His translation and edition of the council of Nice is addressed to John viii. (al. ix.) who was elected pope only in 872.—But supposing we should overlook this, what does Anastasius say? Does he speak *generally* of the acts and canons of the council? not one word like it. He speaks pointedly, *only* of the canons and decrees (or acts, if Mr Lingard will,) *of the apostles* (meaning probably the apostolical constitutions) and of the *sixth general synod*, cited in this council; and of nothing else, "Sane notandum est, *quædam* in hac synodo *ex apostolorum*, et *sextæ universalis synodi* canonibus et *sententiis* inveniri, quæ *penes nos* interpretata *nec habentur nec admittuntur*!!" præfat. in vii. synod. apud Binnium. Tom. iii. part 1. p. 471. Of *these* ("ex his") it seems, the popes admitted not certain things which were contrary to former canons or decrees of that see, or to good morals: "quæ prioribus canonibus vel decretis sanctorum hujus sedis pontificum, aut certe bonis moribus invenientur adversæ:" but not one word is dropped which should lead us to suppose that any one of the *miracles* and *images* in question, and which Mr Lingard would "lay to sleep with the *old Bishops*," are among that number: but quite the contrary; because they only emphatically confirmed the opinion which Adrian had previously sanctioned and adopted. So much for this other instance of Mr Lingard's accuracy, good faith, and fidelity of quotation!!

*Page 45. Note [AA]*

The length to which these Notes have already run, makes it necessary only to refer to the authors already cited, and to the second and third volumes of the preservative against Popery under the proper heads. It pleased God indeed that there should be worshippers of angels in the days of St. Paul ; that there should be worshippers of the virgin Mary in Epiphanius's time ; and that he should condemn this heresy, as well as the use of pictures in the Church ; and should actually tear a veil on which an image was painted. And also that so late as the age of Gregory the 1st. their great Pope, there should be a declaration of his that images or paintings should not be worshipped. This had also been pronounced by the council of Eliberis ; held in the year 305. can. 36. "Placuit picturas in ecclesiis esse non debere, ne quod colitur et adoratur in parietibus designetur."

*Page 46. Note [BB]*

The reader will do well to consult this as edited by Goldastus, with all the other imperial decrees on the subject : Frankfort 1608 : including the council of Paris under Lewis the pious. And he may be amused with the attempts of Barrouius, Bellarmine and Binius to get rid of these authorities. Anastasius, the "Roman Writer of the same age," in his preface above cited, says that the doctrine of the 2d. council of Nice was held by all "quibusdam duntaxat Gallorum exceptis, quibus utique nondum est harum utilitas revelata." "Except certain of the French, to whom the utility of them" (that is images) "had not as yet been revealed." "For they say," adds he "that the work of Men's hands is not to be adored." "quod non sit quodlibet opus manuum hominum adorandum." Which he does not deny to be a true repre-

sentation of the doctrine of the Nicene council, but endeavours to shew the propriety of it. This is clear evidence enough (indeed one of Mr Lingard's own evidences) as to what was the idea of the French Church. Indeed Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, in the middle of the IXth century expressly adopts the doctrine of Gregory 1st. in his epistle to Screnus. See opusc. lv. capit. c. 25. Paris. 1615. And indeed it was the doctrine of all the western Churches. By degrees, in the dark ages, the worship of images, as more suitable to ignorant and superstitious minds, was admitted. It is not to be forgotten that the Caroline books are particularly severe upon the council for dealing about their anathemas so profusely; and call it "madness that a particular Church should attempt to decree a thing not decreed by the apostles or their successors, and to anathematize all other Churches." "*Nam quis furor est, quæve dementia, ut unius partis ecclesia rem quæ neque ab apostolis, neque ab eorum successoribus statuta est, nitens statuere, totius mundi ecclesias conetur anathematizare*" &c. lib : iii. c. xi. see also lib. ii. c. xxxi. So little idea was there that the Pope's sanction to the calling of a council could make it general, or give it authority over any other part of Christendom.

Page 46. Note [cc]

"Bene quod idem Deus qui lege prohibuit similitudinem fieri, extraordinario præcepto serpentis similitudinem indixit. Si eundem Deum observas, habes legem ejus, *ne feceris similitudinem*; si et præceptum factæ postea similitudinis respicis, et tu imitare Moysen, *ne facias adversus legem simulachrum aliquod, nisi et tibi Deus jusserit.*" De idololatr: C. V. In another place he notices this again: and adds "*sic et cheru-*

bim et seraphim, aurea in arcæ figuratum exemplum, certe simplex ornamentum, accommodata suggestui, longe diversas habendo causas idolatriæ conditione, ob quam similitudo prohibetur, non videntur similitudinum prohibitarum legi refragari &c." Contr. Marcion: lib. 2. c. 22. So that this of the brazen serpent and the Cherubim and Seraphim was originally an argument of those who were and are universally condemned as heretics !!

*Page 50. Note [DD]*

See Mr Lingard's tracts p. 207. vindication &c: and reply to the Revd. G. S. Faber at p. 186. which, for a flip-pant, easy, gentlemanlike way of disposing of a Question, are perhaps not to be paralleled. To the other objects of his sneers and sarcasms it is unnecessary to make any further reference. But to shew how perfectly misplaced his ridicule is upon most occasions, it may be as well to instance p. 151. where the reader will find the following pleasantry upon our common prayer book. "sometimes when I have *amused* myself with looking into the book of common prayer, I have found it difficult to persuade myself that I was not reading an unknown tongue." And what passage does the reader think that he instances? the prayers, or litanies, or confessions, or exhortations? or any of those parts which were properly speaking compiled by our reformers? No; but some passages from the book of psalms, such as in themselves perhaps are not easily understood, and still less easily translated. The ridicule therefore will fall rather on the word of God than on our Church; but for this Mr Lingard cares little, so the latter might be affected, though ever so slightly. Let

however the vulgate and other translations, at those parts, be referred to ; they will be found little more intelligible, and not more suitable to the taste of such fastidious gentlemen as Mr Lingard. Why indeed did he not take our later and improved translation, as he might, if he had had any candour ? Every one knows that for sobriety and fervency and purity of devotion, our book of common prayer is without a rival. Let the comparison be made with any of the prayers that are common to the two Churches ; and it will be seen how the translations with which they favour their people, whenever they depart, and as far as they depart from the language of our liturgy (which they are ashamed to borrow *wholly*,) become feeble and insipid. As to the quotation which he has raked out from the homilies ; it is not courtly language indeed but it is plain enough. It is such language as was used in those days. And where will Mr Lingard find any book of homilies, particularly of those times, to be compared with that, taking it altogether and in every respect ?

FINIS.

GOD'S DEALINGS EQUAL TO ALL.

---

A

# SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH

OF

HAUGHTON-LE-SKERNE,

IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM,

ON SUNDAY, THE 16th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1817.

ON OCCASION OF THE

Death

OF THE

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

---

BY THE

REV. THOMAS LE MESURIER, B.D.

RECTOR OF HAUGHTON-LE-SKERNE, AND

DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO LORD

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

---

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1817.

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## S E R M O N.

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*Job, xxxiv. 18, 19, 20.*

IS IT FIT TO SAY TO A KING, THOU ART WICKED?  
AND TO PRINCES, YE ARE UNGODLY?

HOW MUCH LESS TO HIM THAT ACCEPTETH NOT  
THE PERSONS OF PRINCES, NOR REGARDETH THE  
RICH MORE THAN THE POOR? FOR THEY ALL ARE  
THE WORK OF HIS HANDS.

IN A MOMENT SHALL THEY DIE, AND THE PEOPLE  
SHALL BE TROUBLED AT MIDNIGHT, AND PASS  
AWAY: AND THE MIGHTY SHALL BE TAKEN  
AWAY WITHOUT HAND.

IN no part of the Book of Job, and, we might add, any other of the Holy Scriptures, is the great moral of that Book more pointedly and strikingly illustrated than in these few lines. The necessity and propriety of most implicitly submitting ourselves to the Divine dispensations, without in the least questioning or repining at what we may be made to suffer, is here rested upon grounds so plain and sure, that they may be comprehended by the most

simple and unlearned, and cannot be contradicted or impeached by the most wise and best instructed. Job, you will remember, deservedly as he is celebrated for the patience with which he endured such very extraordinary and accumulated sufferings, had failed in this (and in this had shown the weakness of our nature), that he had seemed to throw a doubt upon the justice of his being subjected to such a complication of evils. For this he was most sharply reproved by Elihu, who, in the most impressive language, asserted the just and unlimited power of God over his creatures, even from the very circumstance of his having made them, being “all the work of his hands;” and also his impartiality and goodness, shown forth in his manner of dealing with mankind,—“He accepteth not the  
 “persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more  
 “than the poor.”

It is to this last great and most important truth, pressed as it must necessarily be upon our minds by the awful and afflicting event for which the whole nation is now mourning, that I propose more especially to call your attention in my present discourse. I do it, because it strikes me as being in itself most important and edifying, not only at such a moment as this, but at all times; as tending most particularly to check that spirit of discontent which is so apt to spring out of the irregularity of conditions which it has pleased the Almighty, for good and wise ends, to establish in this world; and as even thus calculated to remove one of the great

stumbling blocks which lie in our way, and which take us off from that entire obedience and submission to God's will, which is the only sure road to salvation. There is, indeed, no mistake more fatal than that which is so commonly made, that riches or earthly power, or high situation, always and invariably bring with them happiness and comfort ; that the men of wealth or rank have nothing to do but to enjoy themselves ; and that they do in fact enjoy all that is good and desirable in this world. Most dangerous indeed, I say, is this very false notion, because, while it makes men discontented with their condition, and, even by that, sinners in a high degree before God, it most strongly also tempts them to obtain for themselves the riches and the power which they so envy and covet, by fraud or oppression, practised upon their neighbours in a greater or less extent. It is therefore of the utmost importance to destroy or counteract this so dangerous error ; to assert and to make all men feel and confess, what all those who believe in the eternal and infinite goodness and justice of God, must feel and confess, that he is the same God, not only to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, not only to one nation or description of men as well as to another, but to every individual of those nations and people ; that he has not confined happiness or enjoyment to any portion of them, but extends his gifts to all equally ; that, as St. Peter was made upon a memorable occasion to declare, " God is no  
 " respecer of persons ; but that in every nation,

“ he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is  
 “ accepted with him.”\*

If, indeed, there were through the whole course of God’s dispensations to be traced any foundation for the contrary idea, that which is so forcibly expressed in my text, of the common end of all, of that uncertainty also which hangs over our continuance in this world, and the natural and necessary consequence which follows upon our quitting it, would of themselves counterbalance all inequality, and make level all distinctions. Speaking of princes and of the rich, Elihu says, in words which one might almost suppose to have been written purposely to describe our present situation, “ In a  
 “ moment they shall die, and the people shall be  
 “ troubled at midnight, and pass away ; and the  
 “ mighty shall be taken away without hand.” Add to this, what the Gospel has pointedly revealed to us, that “ all,” (all without distinction, from the king to the beggar) “ must appear before the  
 “ judgment seat of Christ, that every one may re-  
 “ ceive the things done in his body, according to  
 “ what he hath done, whether good or bad.” Take, I say, only these two circumstances, which every one, who is not an avowed infidel, must admit to be as stated, equal to all, not to be avoided, not to be mitigated in favour of any one (so far from it indeed that we are even assured that the order of things here shall, in many instances, be reversed, that “ many that are first shall be last, and the last

“ first) ;” \* take and weigh but these in your minds, weigh them impartially and let them have their due effect, and then tell me what there can be of inequality in all besides, that should be worth one serious thought ; that, if we were wise and understanding, as we ought to be, could trouble us for a moment, or at least for any length of time ; or could for any time, except perhaps the very instant when we were suffering under any grievous calamity, or acute pain of mind or body, disturb our peace or ruffle our temper ?—Death, and the last judgment !—reserved for all, coming equally upon all, very often without warning, certainly without any such intimation as will necessarily prepare men for it, or will at all prepare them, unless they have themselves done what is required of them towards such a preparation ;—who that thinks rightly upon these, can suffer his thoughts to dwell upon any thing else ?—and what folly is it to look upon any thing else as productive of happiness or misery ?

How is it then that men seem to be so insensible to these truly weighty, these most awful considerations ? that they suffer so many, the most inconsiderable and the most trifling objects of worldly gain or advancement to draw them away from the pursuit of that which alone is their true interest, which alone can afford them real and solid satisfaction ? It is in fact (and hence also the weakness and im-

\* Matth. xix. 30. xx. 16. Mark x. 31. Luke xiii. 30.

perfection of our nature is plainly to be discovered) because such is the end of all men, because therefore we see and hear of it every day, that we either cease wholly to think upon death, or purposely avoid connecting it with what is to come after; that men fall into the temptation of not “seeking those things which are above,” but “set their affections upon the things on the earth.”\* It is therefore an opportunity not to be neglected, upon every loss of friends, or the death of those who, from their rank, or wealth, or beauty, or other accomplishments, were objects of admiration or envy, when therefore the attention is particularly awake, to snatch the moment to recall men to a due sense of their situation; to set before them life and death in their proper colours; to save them from the cheat which they are so apt to put upon themselves.

That such is the present moment who shall deny? We have before us an example of this kind, almost as perfect as can be conceived with a reference to the benefit of which I have been speaking; a young and beautiful Princess, destined in the course of nature to rule over perhaps the most flourishing kingdom at this moment existing; wedded, which very seldom indeed happens to persons of that exalted rank, to a husband of her own choice; he also amiable and virtuous, loving and beloved by her, and both of them loved and admired by all who knew them, and high in reputation with those who had no personal knowledge

\* Coloss. iii. 1, 2.

of them ; enjoying all the advantages of the most exalted rank, with all the domestic felicity which most commonly belongs to the lower ; blessed with health, as with contentment ; and she on the point of crowning the wishes of the nation as well as their own, by the birth of a child, who should give still farther assurance of a tranquil and regular succession to the throne, and thus endear her, if possible, yet more to the people whom she was to govern : with all these blessings, this eminence of situation and of character ; enjoyments for the present and prospects for the future ; neither she nor any one else apprehending the least danger or mishap ; all at once, instead of the rejoicings, for which on all sides we were preparing, we hear of the birth indeed of a child, but dead ;—still, while the mother survived, and, as we were assured, with all likelihood of doing well, we were comforting ourselves that the loss, however grievous, was comparatively small,—that it might be repaired ; when, quick upon this, we find that the loss is indeed irreparable ; that the mother had survived the child only a few hours ; that thus the hopes, which we had so fondly cherished, were not only clouded but extinguished ; that our joy was most completely changed into mourning ;—and mourning more sincere, more deep, or more universal, I may well trust you to say, never was seen.

Taking this now as a mere question of worldly advantages, as an estimate of what was enjoyed by herself, what can be more melancholy, or more to

be deplored? In proportion as she might be envied for what she possessed, the more she might be supposed to be gifted above all others, what was it but that she had more to lose, that that loss was in proportion immense? That indeed it was not so to her, nay, that our loss was gain to her, is owing only to that part of her character which I have not yet touched upon; that she was truly pious and humbly devoted to God; that when she received the news of the first loss, she bore it with that chearful resignation to the Divine Will, which true religion only can impart. But greatly as this must raise our admiration of her, highly as it must contribute to console us with the assurance that she is now blessed, let me remind you that this last, this inestimable advantage, was in no respect one of those that belonged exclusively or principally to her situation. Nay, on the contrary, as I have already intimated, what is said in the Scriptures respecting the description of those who shall inherit the kingdom of God, rather points to the lowest class among the people, to the poor and despised, such as were the first disciples of Christ. This is therefore what all may obtain, that for which no man need desire to be rich or powerful.

But now, blessed as we trust that she is, and far removed from all earthly cares, turn we for a moment from the dead to the living; to her princely consort; to her royal father; to the numerous train of relatives, who looked up to her with the fondest affection;—what are they not suffering?

Does their exalted situation, the pomp and affluence with which they are surrounded,—do these, or any of these, diminish their sorrow, or blunt the edge of their feelings? Do not rather all these circumstances tend to aggravate their pains, and make them more severe? Surely they do.—The more we suppose any of these favoured individuals to be attached to the worldly advantages of their situation, the more must we conclude that they must be shocked, that they must even shrink into themselves, at seeing how, in a moment, they may be deprived of all; how they are in fact stripped of that upon which were set, and deservedly set, their best affections. In these, which are the sharpest of all trials, wealth and power, it is plain, avail nothing; or, if there be any difference in such cases between the different descriptions of men, it is, that to the great and wealthy sorrow is redoubled, that to them misfortune comes in a more frightful, because in a more strange shape.

Thus stands the account between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, as to those most important events, more especially that one event which more than all influences and determines our misery or happiness in the GREAT HEREAFTER. And in these it is clear that the high and the rich have in no way the advantage;—nay, inasmuch as, according to those calculations which envy and jealousy make, with reference to them, they lose more; and as farther, with respect to their real state, they have not only the same, but greater

reason for anxiety and apprehension, we might well count them the greatest sufferers.

But men, as I have said before, will turn from these awful moments, to the gaieties, and the pomp, and the pleasures of the world, and ask why they are so unequally distributed? A short answer therefore (and only a short one can now be given) may not be improper. It might be sufficient for those who really fear God, and own the obligation under which we lie of submitting to his word, to say, that he has so ordered it; that it is before him who made them that “the rich and the poor meet together;”\* that he himself has told us that “the poor we have always with us;”† that from the very moment that men began to have more than was absolutely necessary for the support of life, the abundance has been unequally distributed; and even thus, judging only from experience, we might conclude that such a distribution is unavoidable. But we can see also great utility arising from this state of things. In the first place, it is evident that some must labour, even in tilling the ground, or no produce could be obtained. But in a case, such as that which exists, where, from the abundance of produce, it becomes not necessary that all should labour, who should determine, or how could it be determined, who should be the labourer, if there were not such a class of persons marked out, as it were, at their very birth? In a state where goods and labour should be common,

\* Prov. xxii. 2. † Mat. xxvi. 11. Mark, xiv. 7. John, xii. 8.

as some fanciful people have imagined, how should it be ascertained every day, and every hour almost (for every day and every hour would make some variation), who should go out to work, or who should stay at home; who should feast, or who should prepare the food; who should weave the cloth, or who should have the choicest apparel? Amidst a thousand ever-recurring disputes, and warring claims, how could peace or comfort be found? The truth is, that those who pretend, as some have pretended, that there should be no poor, only mean that there should be no rich; they very foolishly, as well as wickedly, envy the rich, and so would make all poor. For such would be the inevitable result. It is the prospect and the hope of increasing a man's comforts, and of enjoying them in security, which in all conditions, without exception, makes him toil; it is the reward which the rich only can confer upon the industrious, whether in the shape of payment, or of liberality, which makes him put forth his best faculties, and thus add to the common stock;—take away this, and the man will either sit down in indolent despondency, helpless and useless, or his activity will be that of a ferocious savage; he will plunder and prey upon his weaker neighbours. It is indeed only among savages that any thing like this equality is found; but even among them it is not perfect; for there the strongest will secure the largest share, though it be but for a moment. In truth all improvements in knowledge, in science,

in the liberal arts, have all their foundation in this inequality of conditions. It is the man who has a provision made for him, who has therefore leisure as well as disposition for study, that exercises and enlightens his mind, by reflecting on what is before him, by searching for what is hidden, by communicating with others and profiting by their labours; who thus accumulates knowledge and is even thus enabled to direct it to the most useful purposes; nay, to the supplying of amusement as well as instruction, or of both together, and thus refining the manners of men, and imparting to society a charm and an ease, which extend their influence even to the lowest classes. You are well aware also how all improvements in manufactures, as well as in agriculture, are brought about and perfected by large capitals; that most often vast sums must be sunk before any returns are obtained; that therefore the existence of wealth in considerable masses is useful even to the poorest, since the effects of such improvements are felt in every quarter; I might say, in every corner. The most miserable cottager is the better for them.

Here then also, even where it might appear most doubtful, the dispensations of Providence manifest themselves with an equal view to all classes. Still men's eyes are dazzled by the pomp, the splendour, and the apparent (for in truth it is only apparent) gaiety of high life. They see costly equipages, large houses, numerous servants, and set it down that those must be happy who

have them. This is an error which one is even weary with having to combat, and which it has in all ages been the object of the wise and experienced to correct. That large possessions bring with them care and disquiet, has been true long before the days of Solomon ; and he has told us that “ the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.” In the same verse he has told us farther, that “ the sleep of the labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much.”\* And who knew better than he what was pleasure, and what was enjoyment ? He had made the experiment in all its forms, and found, as you well know, that “ all was vanity and vexation of spirit.”† It was so in his days : be assured that so it is in ours. Still more is it so in ours, when, as I have before hinted, our Saviour himself has told us how hard it is, how peculiarly hard, for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven ;‡ in other words, to attain that which is the great, and should be the only end of our being. Surely, if but this one solemn truth were well weighed, it would effectually check mankind in their inordinate pursuits after wealth.

But rulers and kings are also more especially envied, and viewed with even malignant jealousy. What efforts have been directed particularly against them in these latter days, you well know ; and even now the spirit of dissatisfaction and rebellion to authority can hardly be said to be entirely put down. But now what is their state but one of

\* Eccles. v. 12. † Eccles. i. 14. ii 11. ‡ Matth. xviii. 24.

most important and anxious duties ; of constant watchfulness for others more than for themselves ; obliged often to act upon the spur of the moment, where mistakes may be of extensive as well as dangerous consequence, thousands of cares they know, and thousands of vexations, which come not near the man in humble life ; and they are cares, they are a charge and a series of duties which never cease. How can such a one lie down with the uniform quiet and comfort which may be, and are often enjoyed by the lowest of their subjects ? Well may we then allow them what they have of superior advantage, if any such is to be found or really exist, in the magnificence, the luxury, the honours of royalty ; in that elevation above the people which can be truly gratifying only when it is attended with the consciousness of well-doing, with the confidence that diligence and labour have not been wanting.

After all, what is happiness, but that which every individual feels to be such, that comfort or that pleasure which is suited to his feelings and habits and ideas, and which even by that very suitableness become pleasure or comfort ? Now, who shall say what are the enjoyments and the gratifications which are most suitable to the various and multiplied classes of men ; or rather, who shall say that they are not precisely those which the Providence of God has placed within the reach of every one of them respectively, and which we see the soberer and the wiser part of them actually enjoy ? We

have works of imagination which describe sudden transitions from one state to another, and all end in proving that sudden elevation and the change of situation and of pursuit which follows upon it, only produce disappointment and uncomfortableness; uneasiness instead of quiet, and care instead of peace. So may we not conclude, what indeed upon principle is most likely to be true, that every man, every one at least who pursues them, as he ought, with a proper attention to his calling, does in fact partake of the sweets of life in as great a degree as is fitting for him?

Consider,—for I shall now, in the conclusion, direct your attention to her whose untimely death has called forth these observations,—in what did she, our beloved Princess, make her happiness to consist? Was it in the abundance with which she was surrounded, in a display of riches, in pomp or show, in any refinements of luxury? All agree, that this was far from her. She lived, as much as she could, in that retirement which might have become the most private individual; seeking and finding happiness in the discharge of duties, and those the most domestic; such as may and ought to occupy every one in their different stations, even the meanest: rejoicing in the happiness of loving and being beloved by her husband; and from him, to all around, her affection and kindness diffusing themselves with that gentle but steady course which is ever most productive of good. This was her present enjoyment; that which, as I

said before, all may make their own. And if she looked beyond that, to the future, to that Throne which she was one day to ascend, it was with the hope, that, as her sphere of action was enlarged, her ability and her desire to do good would keep pace with it ; it was that she was constantly labouring to qualify herself for that situation, by study, by observation, by communication with those who were best informed ;—by that, lastly,—which is of all means the greatest, which is the only one truly effectual, without which all the other are as nothing,—by constant prayer to the Almighty for his support, by humble and earnest supplication to him for that wisdom which he only can confer. And in this she exercised herself, not only by private, but public devotion ; by that most constant and reverend observance of the Sabbath, which was a source not only of improvement to herself, but of edification to others. This it is which makes our grief for her neither dreary nor uncomfortable. We may not only trust that that God, in whose worship she was so constant, who supported her so wonderfully in her last moments, has received her into his heavenly habitations ; but we may further hope, that as he deigned so to instruct her in the true wisdom, he will in like manner enlighten and support those, whoever they may be, who shall succeed in her place ; that the benefit of her example shall not be lost ; but that “ being dead, she shall yet “ speak.” \*

\* Heb. xi. 4.

Let not the example, the glorious example, be lost, I beseech you, even upon you : do you, let all of us, more and more turn to God with unfeigned devotion : “ make your light to shine,” as her’s did, “ before men ;” \* “ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” (to use the words of the Apostle to the Hebrews), “ as the manner of some is,”—too much indeed is it the manner, and of too many ; but duly treading, as she did, the courts of the Lord ;—“ Exhorting one another, “ and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” † Of that day, I repeat, you are now most forcibly reminded : that awful day, as you see, and as we are told, “ cometh as a thief in the night ;” it spareth not the high any more than the low ; and it can be properly met only by that Hope which, founded in a crucified Saviour, and directed by him in the true way of Salvation, points us to that blessed region where there shall be no strife nor envying, neither weeping nor crying ; but God, even the God of Peace, shall be “ all in all :” which is “ laid up for you” (for I trust ye are indeed believers, and it is laid up for all such) “ in Heaven ;” ‡ but which is to be obtained, as you also know, only by the pure, and simple, and sincere in heart ; by those who harbour no thought which needs concealment, allow themselves in no deed which shuns the light ; who, in respect of worldly advancement or pleasure, seek nothing but what is most strictly their own ;—and

\* Matt. v. 16. † Heb. x. 25. ‡ Coloss. Epistle for the day.

hardly that,—certainly seek it not by means any way unlawful,—but rather are anxious to promote the welfare of others ; constantly looking beyond this earth, to that world to which we are all hastening. This hope it was, “ full,” as it is, “ of “ immortality,” which animated and supported her who is gone, in life as in death ; which will animate and support you, if you will follow after it as you ought ; and which, if it be increased in you, and made more lively even by this awful visitation, will make this and all other God’s chastisements, nay, even what is positively evil, for such is his promise, “ work for good to you and to all that “ love him.”

That Hope I most fervently pray that he may plant and keep alive in all our hearts, and make it fruitful to every good work !

Now to Him, the God of all consolation and mercy, the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most meet, all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore !









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